

# BHAGAT LAKSHMAN SINGH

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY



BHAGAT LAKSHMAN SINGH  
at the age of 82

Born: June 8, 1863

Died December 27, 1944

Edited and Annotated  
by  
GANDA SINGH

CALCUTTA  
THE SIKH CULTURAL CENTRE  
1, LINDSAY STREET  
1965

## INTRODUCTION

It is with a feeling of great personal satisfaction that I am presenting this Autobiography of Bhagat Lakshman Singh to the readers.

On my return from Persia in the Christmas week of 1930, I intended settling down in Lahore and joined in January, 1931, the staff of the *Phulwari* as joint editor. But, for reasons of health, I had to leave Lahore in May and go to my village Pur Hiran, near Hoshiarpur. During my six months' stay at Lahore, I frequently had the opportunity of joining Bhagat Lakshman Singh in his evening walks. During our conversations, I repeatedly urged upon him to write a memoir of the historical events of his time. He had been closely associated with almost all the religious and social reform movements of the Sikhs during the previous fifty years and I felt that his life-story would be very interesting from an historical point of view. His hands were then full with the editing of his weekly newspaper, the *Khalsa*, which he had resuscitated in 1929. For months, he had no clerk and no peon. He used to write practically the whole of the paper himself and then read the galley and final proofs. The wrapping of the paper for posting and affixing the stamps was, not unoften, done by him and, finally, he himself carried on his back the packets in a bed-cover to the Post Office. I admired his courage and tenacity, though it did cause me pain to see the grand old man at the age of 68 limping his way from his residence on the Edward Road to General Post Office on the Mall, with the newspaper loaded on his back. Several times I offered to help him with his work and carry the packets to the Post Office, but he would invariably say that there was no shame in carrying the *Khalsa* which was like his own child.

About writing his memoirs he at last yielded to my pressing requests and, on March 8, 1931, promised to put the work in hand after he had wound up the newspaper which was every week landing him in ever-increasing debts. The *Khalsa* was at last transferred

to Sardar Bakhshish Singh, whose father, Sardar Sohan Singh, was one of Bhagatji's old friends.

He was now free to start work on the Autobiography, but the progress, initially, was slow. It was in the first week of April, 1942, that he was able to give me the manuscript. The last chapter had yet to be written. The final note written by Bhagatji at Montgomery bears the date of November 28, 1942.

I proposed in May, 1942, to the authorities of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, to publish this work at the cost of the Macauliffe Memorial Fund which had been collected by Bhagat ji and made over to the college, but the proposal was turned down on the technical ground that the book would run to more than eighty pages which was the limit fixed for the essays to be written for the Memorial Fund.

Bhagat Lakshman Singh then thought of publishing it himself with a grant from the Patiala State. He wrote about it to Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh who had been connected with the State administration as Home Minister and then, after an interval of several years, as Prime Minister. But somehow the figure of the estimate amounting to 3605/- was misread as Rs. 360/- and His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala sent to Sir Jogendra Singh a cheque for Rs. 300/- as his donation. When the error was pointed out to him, he thought it would be embarrassing writing to His Highness again. The book could not be printed with the small amount received. There was then some correspondence between Bhagat Lakshman Singh and Mr St. Nihal Singh and the Patiala amount was remitted to the latter on June 18, 1943. But before anything could be done for the publication of the book, Bhagat ji died on December 27, 1944, at his residence, the Retreat, on the Asghar Mall, in Rawalpindi.

Twenty years have since gone by. All this time a sense of moral obligation for the publication of this Autobiography, which had been written primarily at my request, had been hanging heavy on my mind. I also knew that it was a work of considerable historical value. It contained information which was not available anywhere else and would, when published, throw a flood of light on

a period of the history of the Punjab which is, not unoften, calculatedly misrepresented by interested people.

AH those who were associated with Bhagat Lakshman Singh either in the field of educational advancement or social reform or had opportunities to know him closely otherwise, admired his great qualities of head and heart. He was frank, honest and truthful to a fault. Both in his speech and in his writings, he would call a spade a spade. He did not mince matters, and knew not how to sugar-coat what he had to say. His two plus two were always four, never less, never more. He knew no hidden ways or underhand means, which, at times, pass under the name of diplomacy. He believed in straight dealings with his friends and foes and always made a frontal attack when he had to deal a blow in the defence of a cause that he believed to be right. He was a man of strong likes and dislikes. But they were applied not to any person as such but only to his actions and behaviour. He would shower full-throated praise even on the worst of his opponents when they deserved it, and slashed his friends and favourites whenever he found them doing anything wrong. Though rough and rugged in his words at times, he had a very tender heart and he burst out in tears when he saw someone in pain and misery. He could not, however, tolerate dishonesty and hypocrisy. He condemned them outright, regardless of time or occasion, although he had to suffer for it several times. He was generous in the extreme and would not feel satisfied till he had liberally repaid any service or favour done to him.

He was meticulous in many of his habits, particularly in matters of personal cleanliness and food. He kept three kinds of soap. The scented cake that he used for washing his face and hands was kept separate from the one that he used for the rest of his body in the bathroom, while the one used in the lavatory was not used for any other purpose.

He avoided receiving in his hands small change of coins from shopkeepers and would generally have it wrapped in a handkerchief. On his return home, he would untie its knots not with his fingers but

with the help of pencils and penholders and put the coins for disinfection in a tumbler full of potassium permanganate solution.

He would not shake hands with anyone he did not know well enough. He suffered from eczema on his legs which he had contracted in Kashmir. He was, therefore, very much afraid of skin diseases.

He cooked his meals himself. His servant would help him with other sundry small jobs. Rarely did he eat at a house other than his own. He made the exception only in the case of his chosen friends. His wife had died at an early age and he had not married again. That was, perhaps, one of the reasons of his exclusiveness. But he was neither self-centred nor self-conceited. He had a warm heart for others and gave due consideration to their feelings and views. To his servants and subordinates, he was not only sympathetic but also generous and would go to any length to help them. Even his personal servant was treated as an equal. To him he was as good a son of God as any other woman-born. I am reminded of a small incident illustrative of this trait of Bhagat Lakshman Singh's character. It was, if I remember correctly, in 1910. He was then Second Master in Government High School, Palampur, in Kangra district. One Sunday forenoon, when he was sitting on the bank of river Beas along with some fellow teachers, his servant brought him sugar, worth a rupee or two, purchased from the local market. Bhagat Lakshman Singh asked him to spread it on the piece of cloth in which it was wrapped to see that it contained no dust or dirt. He found some hair in it and immediately told the servant to throw the sugar into the river. One of his colleagues suggested that if he did not wish to use it, he might give it away to the servant. "What?" said he, "if it is bad for me, it is equally bad for him. How can I give it to him?" He then turned to his servant and ordered him to throw it in the river which he did, however, reluctantly.

He was a strict vegetarian and never touched alcoholic drinks. He would ordinarily avoid even aerated water. He drank it only when he was not sure of the purity of the drinking water. Tea he

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drank twice a day, early in the morning and in the afternoon, but seventy-five per cent of it was milk diluted with boiling tea-water to serve as anti-flatulence.

Like many children, he had acquired in his childhood the habit of eating clay which had affected his health, sapped much of his energy and made him anaemic. It was feared that his promising career might be prematurely cut short and that he might be gathered to his younger brothers before he was forty years of age. But extraordinary precautions, taken later on, which appeared to some to be nothing more than fads, contributed a great deal to his long life and good health. He seldom fell ill or suffered from a cold or fever. He slightly limped on account of a fracture of one of his legs he had suffered while young. Still he regularly went out for long walks in the evening. With simple and balanced diet, he retained sufficient calcium, phosphorus and other vital elements in his body up to the age of 76. When, in 1938, he happened to fracture the femur bone of the second leg owing to a fall from the stairs of Gurdwara Rikab-ganj at New Delhi, it got completely united in about eight weeks and, to the great astonishment of his surgeons, he was restored to normal health once again to strut about in his usual way. It was only in the beginning of his eighty-third year, a few weeks before his death, that his vision became slightly dim and he developed some hardness of hearing. But, otherwise, to the last moments of his life, he retained full command of his faculties and met his end calmly and peacefully.

The thought of death never frightened him. In the summer of 1943, his eczema took a turn for the worse and he felt that the end was near. On September 18, 1943, he wrote out a cheque (No. 817067, S. F. A/c No. 27/2A) for one hundred rupees on the Punjab National Bank, Rawalpindi City, in favour of Malik Harnam Singh, one of his neighbours across the road, for his funeral in case of his death. Even for his last rites, he would not leave things to chance or be a burden to anyone. He had no direct descendants of his own, and his nephews, Dr. Manohar Lai Bhagat, Civil Surgeon, and Harkishan Lai Bhagat, Advocate, were

BHAGAT LAKSHMAN SINGH  
to Malik Harnam Singh

Retreat  
Angkor, R. P. Ind. City,  
18.9.1943.

Dear Malik Harnam Singh Ji

I hand over cheque no. 817067 for Rs. one hundred on Punjab National Bank, R. P. Ind. City. I have become very weak owing to prolonged illness. In case of my collapse the amount may be spent on my funeral. Manohar Lal & Harkishan Lal, my nephews, are far away. Sander Singh, Head Master of the school where I studied, will, I am sure, hand you money and take care of the body.

Thanking you for the trouble,

I am,  
Yr Affl. Servant,  
(Bhagat) Lakshman Singh.

18-95 LAHORE HEAD OFFICE 19-41

**THE Punjab National Bank**  
LIMITED

18.9.1943

PAY TO Malik Harnam Singh (27/2A) RS 100/-

RUPEES one hundred only

Bhagat Lakshman Singh

No. 817067 SFAEN° 27/2A

then working at distant places. But, he had as yet a year and a quarter to live.

Writing to me on May 23, 1944, he said, "I am growing weak. The call may come at any moment. Please come and see me. Bring your good wife along." The post card arrived at Amritsar on the 24th. The same night we left for Rawalpindi and arrived at his house early in the morning. He was then preparing his tea, hale and hearty, with no apparent signs of weakness. "You seem to be in perfect good health", I said to him. "But I have to go, my boy, and I must prepare for it," he replied. The third day when we were about to leave for Amritsar, he told me to take away with me a trunk full of papers, including the original draft and his copy of the typescript of the Autobiography, lest they should be lost when he was gone. I obeyed his command. When we were just stepping out of the gate of his compound, he said to my wife, "Good girl, perhaps we may not meet again, *Sat Sri Akal*—True is the Lord Eternal (srst ?3lS, us aifeg ia **HS'** ai, *nfs* tft **WRIB**)". With tearful eyes we left his 'Retreat' never to see him again.

Such was Bhagat Lakshman Singh. God bless the soul I He belonged to a generation the last traces of which are now fast disappearing.

In his religious views, he was a staunch follower of Guru Govind Singh whose practical philosophy and heroism, coupled with deep humility and faith in God, had attracted him to the Khalsa creed. To him the Guru was the Perfect Man in whose making had blended the lives of nine previous Gurus—Guru Nanak to Guru Tegh Bahadur—and the great heritage of the rishis of yore. Sikhism, he believed, was an independent dispensation and not a sect or a branch of Hinduism which anti-Sikh propagandists of his day sought to establish. They, however, did not actually believe in what they said, for, otherwise, they would not have opposed Hindu depressed classes joining the fold of Sikhism under the influence of the Sikh reform movement. He was a reformist of the purest dye and believed not in the distinctions between man and man perpetuated by the age-old caste system, and he would go to any

length to secure them their rightful place in society. He led a regular campaign against the social iniquities that had crept into the Sikh society under the persistent influence of Hinduism that surrounded the Sikhs both in the towns and in villages.

As, joining the fraternity of the Khalsa through the initiation ceremony, called *Pahul* or *Amrit*, every member accepts the spiritual fatherhood of Guru Govind Singh and becomes the Guru's son, a *Sahibzada*, Bhagat Lakshman Singh launched a movement that every baptized Singh should use prefix of *Sahibzada* with his name. It had a psychological appeal to many enthusiasts in the beginning of the century, but, for want of sustained effort on the part of the protagonists, the movement could not last beyond the second decade when the attention of the community was diverted towards Gurdwara Reform Movement.

Education alone, thought Bhagat Lakshman Singh, could rescue the illiterate ignorant masses from the Brahmanical clutches. For this reason he launched a scheme for having a network of Sikh schools, primary, middle and high, opened in villages, tehsil towns and district headquarters. He began with the district of Rawalpindi, his native place, and carried the torch to wherever he went. He made great personal sacrifices for bringing about a renaissance among the Sikhs and was involved in heavy debts incurred on account of the Sukho, Kallar and other schools and the *Khalsa* newspaper (1899—1901). These he could liquidate only when he joined Government service, to begin with, as an Assistant District Inspector of Schools. A goodly portion of his salary went towards the payment of his debts, and for the greater part of his service of nineteen years and a few months, he had to live barely on the horse-allowance that was allowed to him at first as Assistant District Inspector of Schools and then as District Inspector of Schools, the post that he held in the Punjab Educational Service on his retirement in 1919 on a meagre pension of Rs. 68/- p.m., later raised to Rs. 72/- p.m. He had no other source of income and it was only towards the closing years of his life that, with very frugal savings made in the last years of his service, he could build on the

Asghar Mall Road at Rawalpindi a small three-room cottage for himself.

Educated in, American Mission School, Rawalpindi, and Government College, Lahore, and being interested in journalism, he had developed a direct and forthright style of writing English. To this was added the vigour of his own character and the force of his convictions in the expression of his thoughts and the narration of his story.

He had a facile pen. Religion and history were his favourite subjects. In addition to a number of pamphlets, papers and articles that he occasionally wrote for the *Khalsa*, the *Tribune* and other newspapers and periodicals, a list of which is given at the end, he has left to us two books of permanent value, *A Short Sketch of the Life and Work of Guru Govind Singh* (Lahore, 1909) and the *Sikh Martyrs* (Madras, 1928). This *Autobiography* is his last work. God willing, an effort will be made to follow this book up with a collection of his scattered writings in a series of volumes.

Bhagat Lakshman Singh had great admiration for the British character and for the foreign Christian missionaries, particularly Americans, for their devotion to religion and duty. This was based on his personal experiences. It must be admitted that an average Englishman in several traits of personal and national character is a very superior person. This can be seen better now when Englishmen are gone than when they were here. Then, every action of theirs was seen through coloured glasses of politics and suspicion.

India owes a deep debt of gratitude to Christian missionaries for the light of religion and education that they brought to many parts of this country and for the social and political awakening in the masses that came in their wake. But for the services of hundreds of these devoted souls and the tons of money that the foreign Christian missions have poured into the land of Bharat, millions of people of the depressed classes, now forming a respectable portion of the Indian population, would still have been rotting as condemned untouchables. The Indian socio-religious reformers should be thankful to the Christian missionaries for providing them

with an incentive in the field of education and social reform to ameliorate the condition of their less privileged brethren. It was the foreign Christian missionaries who first lit the torch of renaissance in India by the introduction of Western scientific knowledge through printing press and printed books imported from beyond the seas.

As readers will see in the pages of the *Autobiography*, Bhagat Lakshman Singh was an honest and truthful writer and he has recorded his reminiscences impartially and faithfully. He has written only of events of which he had a first-hand knowledge. He would not write anything on the basis of hearsay. He did not know the art of fabrication and fiction, nor that of diplomatic twisting of facts to suit any preconceived notions or prejudices.

This *Autobiography* will thus help the reader see the eighty-year period (1862-1942) of the history of the Punjab in its true perspective, with particular reference to the socio-religious movements that affected the thought and life not only of Northern India but also of other parts of the country.

As editor, I have allowed the text of the narrative to stand in its original form and have given additional information about events and persons, referred to in the text, in footnotes, written mostly in 1941, with my initials at the end to distinguish them from those of Bhagat Lakshman Singh's.

Lower Mall  
PATIALA  
May 15, 1965

GANDA SINGH

## PREFACE

For some years past some of my friends, particularly Mr. Saint Nihal Singh, Professor Teja Singh and Professor Ganda Singh of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, have been pressing me to write down an account of my fairly long life and of my varied activities. I yield to their demand trusting that it will prove, as they think, an interesting reading.

As some one has said, truth is stranger than fiction. The events I am recording are simple, unexaggerated and stern facts which will show beyond question that despite all assertiveness and resourcefulness of man, there is such a thing as predestined law, call it luck, fortune or anything you may, which governs his minutest concerns, guards him during his voyage over life's 'solemn main' and, overcoming the fury of winds and storms, takes his vessel safely across and sees it nestled in the appointed haven.

**'Retreat'**  
**Asghar Mall, Rawalpindi,**  
**1st March, 1938**

**LAKSHMAN SINGH**



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## ERRATA

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19	22	for	of
31	26	<i>Theosophist</i> ,	<i>Theosophist</i> ;
* 33	36	<i>Kisu na</i>	<i>Kisuna</i> (footnote)
149	9	1901	1900
189	22	1901	1900
170	6	late	ate
200	19	afterwards	after (footnote)
	18	Gopi Chand	Gopi Chand,

## CHAPTER I

### ANCESTORS

According to a tradition in my family that has been handed down to us from mouth to mouth, our ancestor was a Kohli Khatri. He migrated to Garhi Habibullah in Hazara district where he contracted matrimonial ties with the daughter of his host, a wine-seller. How he came to dwell there, and from where, cannot be known, for the *buhī* of our Pandits is a new one, the old one having been mislaid or lost. There are any number of conflicting accounts about our origin bearing witness to our high lineage, which can be well laid aside. Sufficient to say that our forbears were men of pluck and energy and they understood to make the mother earth yield enough to make life worth living. Whenever our mothers gave birth to male off-spring, it was custom in the family to clothe them on the first Shivratri day in saffron coloured *Angrakhas* (coats), take them out in willow-made baskets and place bows and arrows in their hands signifying that when grown up, they would have to defend their homes and hearths, may be even to lead a life of toil and moil to keep their people above want. It is people such as these whom Dame Luck sometimes elects to ennoble and lend them name and fame. This fortunate Kisonage was Nihal Chand to whom among other sons, a son was born named Dayal Chand (pet name Diala). He resided in Serai Saleh, a village three miles from Haripur, district Hazara. His unique saintly life won for the family a distinguished name. He was a great Sanskrit scholar and practised as an Ayurvedic physician in that *ilāqa*. His fame as a *Bhagat* (saint) spread far and <sup>V i d e t</sup> h of his time was spent in devotion and in the worship <sup>01</sup> the idol in the village Thakurdwara close by which still

stands also the sacred pipal tree which still lends beauty to the landscape. He was a Vaishnava Hindu and he avoided the use of even such vegetable as onions, radishes and several kinds of pulses. He cooked his own meals and washed and dried wheat and other corn before they were ground and made fit for use. He even washed the fuel he used. He wore sandals and visited Mirpur in Jammu territory, twice every year, to pay homage to the shrine sacred to the memory of Swami Shankracharya over which a Sanyasi guru always presided. Mirpur was about 70 miles: via Rawalpindi and the road was infested with robbers especially near Usman-Khattar and Sang-Jani. But no one appears to have molested Bhagat Dyal Chand. These journeys he performed bare-footed and when he returned from the precincts of the temple he did not turn his back on it till its dome faded in the distance. He had a large family of seven sons and one daughter to support, but still he spared a great deal to spend on charity, which took the shape of feeding the Brahmans and on the maintenance of a small Sanskrit school, which he kept in his house. Our family • *Prohit*, Raizada Jawahar Mall Dutt, who was about 90 years old, when I was the Headmaster of the Municipal Board School, Haripur in 1890, remembered Bhagat Dyal Chand most admiringly and has said that he had heard his elders highly eulogizing Bhagatji's efforts for the uplift of the people of his place.

One incident which my elders loved to relate to me is enough to show the immense hold Bhagat Dyal Chand had over the people with whom he had to deal. He had betrothed his daughter to a Sikh youth of Divalian, a village in the Tehsil of Chakwal, District Jhelum. The Khan of Serai Saleh, on learning that Bhagatji would not marry his daughter at Serai Saleh, lest the provision of *Jhatka* meat to the bridegroom's party might give offence to the local Mussulmans, and was preparing to proceed to Rawalpindi to perform the nuptial ceremonies there, prevailed on Bhagatji to abandon the idea. He himself bore all expenses of the marriage, and what is particularly noteworthy, he himself provided the bridegroom's party with *Jhatka* meat. And as if all this was not sufficient as an indication of his good-will,

he sent an armed escort as far as the stage of Sang-Jani to the bride-groom's party back home safe. Such a godly man could not have accumulated much. He became a widower at an advanced age and about the same time he lost his eldest son, **Uohad** been only recently married. To add to these calamities there was a theft in the house and robbers took away everything of value. The good man did not survive these misfortunes very long. He bequeathed his house to Bhai Chhataki of Kot Najibullah, a saint of renown.

I saw this house in 1927. It was in a dilapidated condition. It consisted of a few *Kacha* rooms some of which served as a Dharamsala, the rest were occupied by a goldsmith who paid rent for them to one Gopal, a Khatri, who does business in Haripur.

At the time of Bhagatji's death his sons appear to have been very young; for an entry in the family Prohit's book at Hardwar shows that it was his nephews from the village of Shah-Allah-Ditta, in the Rawalpindi district, who took his ashes to Hardwar. His widowed daughter-in-law, Bibi Mahan Devi, moved to Rawalpindi City, with the six minor orphan brothers of her deceased husband. There she purchased a *Kacha* house to live in (all houses there were *Kacha* those days) by parting with the few ornaments which she still possessed. She managed to eke out her living there with what she got from spinning and needle work, and, what is wonderful to relate, she was able not only to rear up all her young wards but also to get them married in respectable families. Three of them died childless. The eldest of the remaining three was Bhagat Jawahir Mall. The second one was Bhagat Hushnak Singh and the third Bhagat Sohna Mall.

Bhagat Jawahir Mall grew to be a notable person. He was of a religious bent of mind from his very childhood. Having been brought up under Sikh influence he had learnt to cherish *Gurbani* very dearly which he loved to read and recite. Not unlike his father, he spent much of his time in meditation and prayers, for which reason he was remembered as *Sain Sahib* (a mystic saint) by his friends and admirers. He lived a long while

at Hazro, a small town in the district of Attock, where he collected round him a number of disciples. The most distinguished of these was the well known saint, Bhai Balak Singh,\* the Guru of the famous Baba Ram Singh, who subsequently set up a sect of his own called *Kookas* or *Namiharis* and who was not long after deported to Burma and was incarcerated in the fort of Mandalay till he died there. This was because a section of his followers had proved turbulent and the local authorities at Amritsar and Ludhiana believed that the Kuka movement had been started to overthrow the Government of the East India Company. was perhaps three years old when I was taken up and caressed by a tall handsome man of about 40 years, wearing a *Phargal* and a *Dopatta*, when he entered Sain Sahib's *deorhi* (portico). This was Baba Ram Singh.f And he was the last!

\*Bhai Balak Singh, the founder of the Kooka s<sup>h</sup>ct, and the spiritual guide of Baba Ram Singh, was born at Chhoi in the Attock District in 1799 A. D. His father Dayal Singh was an ordinary village shop-keeper. But the religious tendencies of Balak Singh soon won him fame as a saint. His famous disciple Bibi Ram Singh was attracted towards him in about 1898 Bk. when he was yet a trooper in the Sikh army. Bhai Balak Singh spent most of his life at Hazro where he died on Maghar Sudi puranmashi 1919 Bk. (December 6, 1862).— G.S.

t Baba Ram Singh was the son of a carpenter Jassa Singh of Bhaini in the district of Ludhiana, and was born on Magh Sudi 5, 1872 Bk. (February 3, 1816). He entered the Sikh service as a trooper in about 1836 and served for some time. His association with Bhai Balak Singh of Hazro turned him into a religious zealot. He left the army in about 1841 and assumed the role of a preacher. He seems to have keenly felt religious degeneration of the Sikhs after the loss of their political independence. But the British Government found no fault with him or with his Kooka followers although their activities were closely watched for about a decade after the suppression of the Indian mutiny of 1857-58. In spite of the revival of Sikh puritanism by Ram Singh, there was yet a great deal of Hinduism left in the Kookas to be easily inflamed over cow-killing, resulting in the murder of butchers at Amritsar in 1871. Through the injudicious activities of some of the Kookas, Baba Ram Singh, in spite of his iamcenca, was sooa Undel

son „ have taken any serious interest in the politics of the jay He appeared to have been a man of God through and through, and a sort of a halo seemed to have shed its refulgence on his face !

The stern action of the officers of the Government of India against the Kookas might have been justified for ought I know; but that much of the yarn woven to prove that there was a conspiracy to overthrow the British rule was not quite of the right sort would be evident from the short anecdote I have to relate in this connection. I was a small child when I accompanied an aunt of mine, who was the wife of a well-known contractor in Rawalpindi, on a visit to Bhai Narain Singh, an Extra Assistant Commissioner, who was on his deathbed. The man was then in a delirious state. His hands seemed to be pinioned to the bed and he was jumping and shouting : *Hue Kuke Ae* (the Kukas have come) ! His cadaverous look and pertubering eyes frightened me and I fell down unconscious. Long after when I grew young I learnt that this man was a Reader in the Amritsar Tehsil Office and that he was made a Tehsildar and then an Extra Assistant Commissioner as a reward for his acting as a Police informer. The poor Kukas had been blown up by cannon balls and had gone to the regions from where there wis no coming back. The dying man was simply conjuring the figures of the innocent men whom he had sacrificed in his greed for pelf and power.

In the letter\* that Bhai Balak Singh wrote to Sain Sahib on Maghar 18, 1919 Bk., December 1, 1862, some time before his death, he remembers him as if he was Sain Sahib's disciple, and the style and tone of the letter were highly reverential. The Namdharis, followers of Baba Ram Singh, *Keshadlmris* and *Sahjdharis*,

[ Continued from the lait page.

in difficulties, and wis exiled from the Panjab on January 18, 1872, after 65 of them had been blown away from the guns in cold blood on the 17th and 18A. He died on November 29, 1884, in his exile in Burma. —G.S.

\* Appendix A

both living in the Attock district and in the Swabi Tehsil of the Peshawar (now Mardan) District, worshipped the memory of Sain Sahib even so late as 1889 when I was the Headmaster of the Municipal Board School, Hazro. I was only 26 years old at the time. The consideration with which I was treated by all that was good there was simply surprising particularly when it is borne in mind that I was not a grandson of Sain Sahib, but that of a brother of his. When one day I went to Zehda (Tehsil Swabi) on a pleasure trip, in company with half a dozen friends, the congregation of the Zehda Gurdwara made me an offering of a heap of *Patasa* (sugar cakes) and presented me with a handsome purse and escorted me in a procession to the ferry on the right bank of the Indus, singing hymns from the Sikh scriptures. Bhai Dhani Ram, about 90 years old, then leader of Namdharis in these parts, simply roused my indignation when he took hold of my feet, as I was about to enter the boat, which was waiting for us, and prayed for my benedictions, for my education and training in the American Presbyterian Mission School, Rawalpindi, had taught me to believe! that it was a sin for one man to bow to another. I had felt disgusted similarly when I was a mere child of 8 or 9 years, and when, an elderly Namdhari Sikh on recognizing my grandfather, whom I then accompanied, first fell at his feet and then at mine as he came out of the Darshani Deorhi of the Golden Temple, Amritsar, and met us in the courtyard facing the Akal Takht. Sain Sahib\* had five sons. The most distinguished of his offspring are Bhagat Ishwar Das, M.A., Retired Advocate, High Court Punjab, Rail Bahadur Bhagat Narain Das, M.A., and Bhagat Govind Das, M.A. Bhagat Ishwar Das is one of the distinguished leaders to whose life-long labour the success of the Dayanand Anglo-Vedic College, Lahore, is principally due. Bhagat Govind Das is an ornament of the legal profession in Lahore, and as Secretary of the Punjab

\* A *Deorah* now stands in Rawalpindi in the midst of a grove called Tapo Ban, near I'dgah, where Sain Sahib's remains were cremated. A *mela* takes place here annually on which occasion people assemble to listen to sacred music and renew their connection with the departed saint.  
—BLS.

National Bank for over a decade and a half he has contributed not a little to help trade and industry. The third brother, Rai Bahadur Bhagat Narayan Das, M.A., Sessions Judge, to whom I have dedicated my book, *Sikh Martyr\**, was the most distinguished of all. Specklessly pure in private life, most devout and God-fearing, he was rightly held in great esteem wherever he lived and I have yet to meet a man mere loving and lovable leaving, of course, my own deceased brother, the late Bhagat Balmokand, B.A., LL.B., to whom I shall have to refer further on in these pages. Lieutenant Pramindra Singh Bhagat, who has been awarded Victoria Cross for distinguished work in the present war and whom Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, Punjab Premier, has remembered as the first Indian who has won this distinguished honour, vide his telegram published in the *Tribune*, Lahore, dated the 12th June 1941, is a grandson of Bhagat Narayan Das.

I know little about Bhagat Hushnak Singh, Sain Sahib's younger brother, except that two of his sons were extraordinary good men. The eldest Bhagat Kalayan Das had the face and apppearance of a *Rishi*. His brother, Bhagat Man Singh, was an extremely handsome man. He bore an epicurean look but in reality he had a noble heart. Without appearing to love anybody, he lived and died for others, particularly for his near relatives. Both these brothers have left no male issue. Bhagat Kalyan Das had only one daughter who was married to the late Sirdar Bahadur Malik Mohan Singh, President, Municipal Committee, Rawalpindi. Her eldest son Sardar Bahadur Malik Teja Singh, CLE., is Chief Engineer to Government of India, New Delhi. Another of her sons Malik Hatdit Singh is a distinguished I.C.S. man. He was Deputy Trade Commissioner in London for a number of years, a Secretary in the Commerce Department of the Government of India, and is now a days Trade Commissioner in the United States of America.

The third son of Bhagat Dyal Chand was Bhagat Sohna Mall. He was my grandfather. He was neither spiritual nor intellectual like Sain Sahib, but simplicity and purity sparkled from his face. I was extremely fond of him and he doted on me.

## CHAPTER II

## BIRTH AND PARENTAGE

My grandfather had three sons, of whom Bhagat Kahan Chand, my father, was the eldest. As the family was poor, both my grandfather and my father and my uncles had to work for bread. They held a druggist's shop conjointly with the father of the late Bhagat Karam Chand, a noted physician in Rawalpindi. The work was distasteful to my father. He had a great longing for education and soon found an excuse to leave the shop and join an indigenous school set up by Mian Nizam-ud-Din of blessed memory and uncle of Mian Feroze-ud-Din, who recently retired from service in the Public Works Department and is now enjoying well-earned rest. Of those who received education in that *Maktab* along with my father and whom I can now remember, were Pandit Gariga Rama and Misar Beli Ram, who both became Tehsildars and died young, and Mehta Sada Rang who, though not so lucky, lived to good old age, much respected by his contemporaries. My father had not yet finished *Gulistan and Bostan*, the well known works of the great Persian poet, Sheikh Sa'di, when it was thought that it was high time he should get service as a Munshi. Men of education being rare those days, my father was easily able to get a position in the District Vernacular Office carrying Rs. 10/- as salary. There were great rejoicings in the family at this good luck. And that it was, indeed, the case, may be judged from the fact that the price of wheat, when I was a mere boy, was a maund and a half, and of *ghee* 1 seers a rupee. Heaps of fuel could be had for a few annas and a couple of rupees could procure a suit of linen. Not many years elapsed before he was appointed statistical writer in the Deputy Commissioners's Office on Rs. 30/- per mensem. This was regarded

as a unique fortune; for at that time there were only two or three offices in Rawalpindi and men whose income was Rs. 30/- or upwards could be counted on fingers.

My father was tall and handsome man possessed of great vivacity of temper. He seemed to be conscious of these heaven-bestowed gifts. He was very punctilious in matters of dress and diet; and I do not remember an occasion when he did not himself wash his vessels again before he allowed his meals to be served to him. His *chouka* had to be washed in his presence and my mother or I or my brothers or sisters had to fan off flies lest they might sit on his meals and thus avoid the necessity of their being thrown away. He never went out before he examined his dress with the help of a beautiful large-sized looking-glass and was satisfied that he looked neat and trim. There was never a day when he did not bathe in the river away from public resort and he never used the water-closet in the house unless he was ill and it was physically impossible for him to go out. He never took meals without hearing *Katha* recited in the *Dharamsala* that he visited. He never associated with people of indifferent character. From among his select companions, I remember Bakhshi Nihal Chand Dutt, a Reader in the District Court. It was spoken of Bakhshi-ji that he was so upright that not even the highest of men dared approach him with any improper request.

With all these admirable features in his character, my father was slow in his work which accounts for the fact that he did not rise high in official cadre. He was only getting Rs. 60/- per mensem when he retired. Successive Deputy Commissioners spoke highly of his integrity and conscientious discharge of duty. Once, I know, his roll was called for the post of a Tehsildar; but he failed to see the Commissioner in whose gift the appointment lay.

My mother, *Bhagatani* Gurditti, was quite a different sort of person. She was born at Lahore and was strong and lordly with her demeanour, qualities that she had inherited from both her Parents. Her father, Sirdar Karam Singh, a jolly, gay man was co-partner of Sirdar Makhan Singh, father of the late Rai Bahadur Sirdar Sujan Singh Chadha, the premier Rais of

Rawalpindi, in timber business at Lahore. His smartness and unusual intelligence, combined with industry and integrity, contributed not a little to the success of the firm. Her mother, Gulab Devi, was tall and queenly in her gait and look. She was a sister of Malik Jwala Singh, a well-to-do *Zamindar* of Dera Khalsa, district Rawalpindi. Her large, generous heart stood her in good stead when she had to face misfortune on my maternal-grandfather getting a stroke of paralysis and dying a premature death. She held her head erect and lived and died as a high-bred lady should, highly valued and respected by her relatives and neighbours.

As an instance of the turns of the wheel of fortune I may here mention the phenomenal rise of Malik Khazan Singh, husband of my mother's first cousin on father side. When a young man he was an employee of Malik Jwala Singh and was getting, I was told Rs. 2/- per mensem or so as salary. Malik Jwala Singh was addicted to drink. In the course of a few years he had to face penury and want. Malik Khazan Singh who, by then, had earned for himself a position in Rawalpindi city, took him into his service, out of pity, on the monthly wage of rupees six. This low position Malik Jwalai Singh occupied for a long time till he grew very old and retired to his native village. But he was a true Sirdar in every sense. He had not much cash with him. But he had extensive lands and when seasons were good the produce was abundant. This abundance he shared with friends and neighbours in his village and with a host of relatives in Rawalpindi. Every year loads of wheat, which his lands produced, were sent to the descendants of his sisters and aunts of whom there was a lot, as loving gift which were highly appreciated. His son, Malik Jai Singh, attained a venerable age and died only recently. Throughout his life he was a terror for all evil-doers in the neighbourhood and a call for help from the weak and the oppressed always received from him a generous response.

My mother, when she was about 20 years old, went to Kallar with a couple of other girls to learn Gurmukhi from Matai Bhan Dai, wife of the late Sir Baba Khem Singh Sahib Bedi, and spent her time at Kallar to the best advantage and it was not long before she acquired a competency in reading and reciting

*Gurbani*. She daily heard and recited *Katha* from Guru Granth Sahib which she had almost committed to memory. *Vedanta* was her favourite study and all her life she loved to hear and read of it and to discuss it in private and select gatherings. She died on September 7, 1926 when she was about 83 years old. It was an unchangeable custom with her to hold ladies' congregations in her house and impart instructions in religious lore. And this was in addition to her own regular attendance both morning and evening at her favourite places of worship.

To these remarkably good parents I was born on June 8, 1863. Two more sons had been born before me and one, dear Mohan Lai, after me. They all died when mere babies. I was, therefore, looked upon as a precious gift and was cherished as such until two more brothers, Gokal Chand and Balmokand, were born. Every evening at night-fall my mother recited the well known *Mantra, Kanual-Netar*. In this I ardently joined and I told my mother that if heaven blessed her with two more sons, I would christen them as Gokal and Balmokand, thus keeping intact in the family the memory of the illustrious name of Sri Krishna and of Gokal, the town of Sri Krishna's birth.

My mother was very lucky in the choice of her friends. Of these the chief were Bibi Nihal Devi, aunt of the late Sardar Sahib Bawa Hari Singh *Jagirdar* and Honorary Magistrate. She was over 80 years old then. She was left a widow when a mere child. Her whole life was led in seclusion and prayer and in various acts of merit and she went out daily for bath in the river Loh, over a mile distant, and returned home before dawn. My mother generally accompanied her. On all these occasions she took me with her. Sometimes she went alone with me, then 7 or 8 years old, as her companion, and it was still dark when she returned home: she was so fearless. Her other companion was aunt Radhan, sister of the late Sirdar Sujan Singh, *Rai Bahadur*, an ideally good woman, who lived to a good old age, honoured by her whole town for her saintly living. Two more ladies, who often loved and esteemed my mother, were Bibi Bhan Devi, sister of Mohan Lai Singh Dogra, who held sway in Rawalpindi for



sometime during Sikh rule and Sardarni Bishen Dai, wife of the late Sirdar Kirpal Singh Chadha, a lady of queenly dignity and benignant disposition. She never forgot that my maternal grandfather and Sardar Makhan Singh, her husband's brother, had exchanged turbans, a sign of undying friendship in those days, and till she died she saw that on the marriages of my brothers and sisters *Nanaka Chaj* (dowry from one's maternal-grandfather) was given. It was this relationship which made me intimate with the late Sardar Sujan Singh and gave me an influence over his son J the late Sardar Hardit Singh, father of Sardar Sohan Singh and Sardar Bahadur Mohan Singh Chadha, now-a-days a member of the Council of the Secretary of State for India, and I was able to see that Sikhs had their due share of the charities provided for in the Raghunath Mandir Trust.

## CHAPTER III

### CHILDHOOD AND BOYHOOD

( 1870 to 1877 )

My childhood, properly speaking, was manhood practically. My only companion was my mother. Morning and evening I accompanied her to Dharamsala and temples. Only three or four big people in Rawalpindi had servants to help in household work. As a rule men did their own work. They were their own coolies, their own water-carriers. My father being a Munshi in the District Kutchery got some help from the office peons in lieu of free food supplied to them ; but still there was much that fell to my lot. Somehow from early childhood it had got into my head to partake of food cooked with my own hands. This was a great saving of labour to my mother. The time thus saved she spent in her devotions. But as I grew in years and had to attend to my studies I felt household work somewhat irksome. And when I refused doing my share of work I was treated unkindly by both of my parents. The result was my open revolt. And when I saw that nobody cared to find out why I was becoming peevish, I attempted twice to run away from the house of my parents to search for any work that might fall to my lot and thus escape from home tyranny. On both these occasions I was caught and brought back. And though thence forward I had greater freedom, I had to submit *nolens volens* to another form of tyranny. Even when six or seven years old, I was made to go to the river barefooted in the month of Kartik, and this before dawn, for this early bath was regarded a *Mahatam* (an act of merit). In addition to fasts on such big festivals as Janam-

Ashtami and Ram-Naumi I had to observe fasts on every *lkadashi* and *Puran-Mashi* and on all *Nauraias*. I had to hear recitations of *Kaiha* from Shastras and reading from Guru Granth Sahib, and as both of my parents were leading *Satsangis* there was no Pandit or Sadhu of some renown, who visited our town and halted there for sometime, whom I did not know. And before I was fourteen I had completed my study of *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. All this was an indirect gain for which I cannot be too grateful.

## CHAPTER IV

### I FIRST KNOW BABA SIR KHEM SINGH BEDI

The only Dharamsala worth the name, Bara Dari, was close to my ancestral house. Baba, afterwards Baba Sir, Khem Singh Bedi, halted at this Dharamsala whenever he visited Rawalpindi. Hundreds of people of all ages, men, women and children, flocked on those occasions to have his *Darshan*. I never lost such an occasion of paying my respects to him, particularly because he was very much fond of me and loved and caressed me on account of my being the eldest son of a distinguished pupil of his first wife. It is difficult to describe the enthusiasm he inspired. Though he could neither read nor write, he could recite the scriptural passages from memory. And the way he used this knowledge to enthuse his followers and indirectly add to his influence over them was simply wonderful. His figure was small and complexion rather dark. His eyes too were not very particularly bright. But he made up for all this by the costume he wore. He seems to have studied how to look grand and majestic. He rode out daily for *Shikar* with a hawk perching on his left hand. This position he carefully maintained even when presiding at the daily congregations. And if his idea was to actually look like the illustrious Guru Govind Singh, it may be safely stated that he succeeded in this endeavour to no small extent. His followers believed him to be an *avatar* whose mere touch would save them. Most men believed in charms those days. Baba Sahib also seemed to believe in their efficacy. At first he would scribble something on small bits of yellow paper. But later, when his influence spread over the whole Frontier, in addition to Dhanni and Pothohar, he devised a rubber stamp and the services of many a distinguished man, who came to pay

his respects to him, were requisitioned to obtain its impressions in any number. And I curiously watched how wily Honorary Magistrates and contractors devoutly applied themselves to the manufacturing of these *Jantras* and amulets. A waggish person told me, long after that Baba had made it a study to look great and influential and impress the officialdom of those days that he was the premier Sikh Guru and that no contemporary of his wielded such an influence over them as he did.

When the Lieutenant-Governor Sir Robert Egerton, if I remember the name aright, was on his way to Peshawar, the Deputy Commissioner of Rawalpindi asked a number of Sikh Sardars to escort His Honour up to Attok. All the Sardars returned but Baba Sahib expressed his intention to accompany His Honour up to Peshawar itself, which request was, of course, granted. He put up in the cantonment in the vicinity of the Lieutenant Governor's camp and just when His Honour had retired for the night he was disturbed by the beating of drums and firing of crackers. The whole camp was astir and alarm was sounded. It was feared that Frontier Pathans had come to raid the camp. Soon however, it was known that it was Sikh disciples who had come to pay their homage to the Guru. So the fears of Lieutenant-Governor's sentries were allayed and he had a restful sleep. Whether this night-visit of the worshippers was a pre-conceived plan, as it was insinuated broadly, I am not much concerned with. Neither can I positively vouch for the truth of the later report that Baba waited upon the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab and placed all his resources at the disposal of the Government to suppress any rising that might result from the visit of Maharaja Dalip Singh, the surviving son of the Great Sikh Emperor Maharaja Ranjit Singh. I have not been able till now to spot the man or men who knowingly or unknowingly created the scare to frighten the Government on the day which issued orders prohibiting the entry of Maharaja Dalip Singh into the province of which he had been a ruler and from which he had been removed when a child, for no fault of his, for the responsibility of the second Sikh War lay principally with the resident, Sir Fredrick Currie, and a host of British officers who

had been deputed to maintain law and order in the Punjab. Be that as it may, I remember how the Sikh community felt the wrong done them in the forced return from Aden of their beloved Emperor. And the memory of this grave injustice will, I dare say, rankle long in the breasts of all in whose veins runs the Sikh blood. I have mostly led the life of a school-master and Inspector of Schools and have had nothing to do with Government or art of Government, but speaking at this distance of time, I wonder what it could be that had inspired terror in the breasts of the rulers of those days; for from what I know of contemporary history, I dare say, the visit of Maharaja Dalip Singh would have been regarded as a generous act of the British Government and would have served to cement the bond of friendship that had already bound them with the Government. Their military backbone had been broken by the Second Sikh War and they had taken to the plough and to the arts of peace. That their hearts were sound and that not only did they not cherish any ill-will towards the Government, but were, on the other hand, anxious to show that all the strength that they possessed would be at the disposal of the government, would be evident from the fact that it was they mostly who had helped in the Purbia Mutiny of 1857 and had won back for their rulers the Government of India. This being the case, the visit of Maharaja Dalip Singh would have passed off peacefully. And any attempt at stirring up disaffection would have been easily defeated. All this, however, is not relevant to my story. I know this much only that rightly or wrongly the name of Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi, was associated with a couple of other men of the Central Punjab with this sad event.

It is sufficient here to remark that all this did not lower Baba Khem Singh in my estimation. Till he was gathered to his fathers, loaded with years, he continued to be the beau-ideal of a thorough gentleman. With all the consummate skill with which he carved his fortune and grew fabulously rich he was simple to a fault and loving and lovable. I never lost an opportunity to go and see him and pay my respects to him. On one such occasion when, at my lectures in the Gordon Presbyterian Mission College,

Rawalpindi, in which I was then employed, I thought of visiting the Baba before I returned home. It was extremely hot at the time. Very few people were seen in the bazars and when I reached Damdama Sahib, Baba's residence in Rawalpindi, and went to the uppermost storey and knocked, a big burly old Sikh of Dhamial, a village to the south of Rawalpindi, who did not know me, opened the door lightly and protested against my seeking an interview at that inconvenient hour. But Baba who was thus disturbed in his sleep recognized my voice and allowed me to enter. Another well-dressed Sikh, also of Dhamial village, was shampooing him. I seated myself on the floor and apologized for the intrusion. It was long since, I said, that I had been to him and I thought it was the time when he was alone and that I could enjoy his conversation which always delighted me. Of course, my pleasant chattering pleased the Baba and he remarked that my visit at that inconvenient hour reminded him of the good old days when *Sangats* of Rawalpindi went up to the '*Parao*' stage of Rawat, about ten miles off, in hundreds with drums and cymbals to do him honour singing hymns all the way; but all this had changed. "You, too, Sire", retorted I in a suppressed tone, "have very much changed." "You were, then, a saint, but now you are more a prince than any thing else." The attendants of Baba became furious at what they thought was an open slight to such an illustrious man. They were abruptly calmed down, when Baba took hold of my head and caressed me remarking, "Well said, my boy, you are perfectly right. Truly, I am not the man I was."

## CHAPTER V

### I LOVE BOOKS

I was fond of books even when I was a mere child. And I am glad I possessed them in plenty. Both of my cousins, *Rai Bahadur* Bhagat Narain Das, M.A., and Bhagat Ishwar Das, M.A., were in those days receiving instruction in the Government College at Lahore. Their library books filled any number of almirahs. It was a custom with an uncle of mine to visit auction stalls and purchase books which officers parted with when going home on long leave. Thus it was that in the course of time we had a big library consisting of any number of valuable books on any number of subjects. Unfortunately, however, the family failed to benefit from them, for I was a very unsatisfactory custodian. Good books in those days were very rare. Again very few people could afford to purchase them. I never had the courage to refuse if anyone asked for them. Hundreds of books were lent, but very few people cared to return them. When my cousins, on return from the Lahore Government College, enquired why the almirahs were almost empty, I said, by way of explanation, that books were meant for reading and that I had given them away. They smiled and often afterwards they recalled this circumstance and laughed at my simplicity, or rather folly, in parting with a possession than which there could be nothing dearer to people thirsting of knowledge.

I had my own private library also. There were then only two volumes of Webster's Dictionary and Forbes' *English-Urdu dictionary* or English-Persian in the whole town costing something Rs. 20/- and Rs. 30/- respectively in the whole town. One set,

an old one, was in the Mission High School Library and the other with me.

They were of considerable help to me as reference books and contributed very much to my acquiring competency in writing English. And that this was not an empty boast may be judged from the two incidents of my boyhood. I was in the 9th class when Sir Denzil Ibbetson, I.C.S., Director, Public Instruction, who afterwards occupied the Punjab satrapy, visited the Rawalpindi Presbyterian Mission High School and dictated a passage from a book he had with him. It was not a small astonishment to me when my slate was returned to me and I found that two words *honor* and *favor* were crossed and marked as incorrect. I at once took the Webster's big volume in my arms and went to show it to the Director who was then strolling in the school hall with the Headmaster, Babu Haradhan Ghose. "I say, sir," I submitted to the Director, Public Instruction, "these words have not been wrongly spelt. Please see this dictionary." Mr. Ibbetson seemed to be surprised at my temerity in my endeavour to correct him, but at once dismissed me simply saying, "This is not English dictionary."

The same year the Headmaster gave us a small piece from the famous Urdu book *Chahar Darwesh* or *Bagh-o-Bahar*, *iom* rendering it into English. Next morning when I presented my exercise book, the Headmaster casually remarked that the working did not appear to be mine. To show how he was mistaken in the impression he had formed, I respectfully asked him to set me another piece. This was done. And to every one's astonishment, my working tallied with that of Forbes, the English translator of the volume.

In my choice of books,\* I was particularly lucky. Books on religion and religious history particularly appealed to me. The study of popular books on astronomy filled me with wonder and astonishment at the sight of heavenly bodies dangling in steller regions and jumping and dancing as it were in eternal merriment. 1

Before I was seventeen I had finished the *Mysteries of the Court of London* in, perhaps, four beautifully bound volumes, and

the *Mysteries of London* in twelve volumes; equally well printed, before I was 20 years old. I enjoyed the study of these books' greatly. They were in fact a treat to me. Not because I had very particular liking for scandalous tales about men, great or small, but because their study convinced me that sins of flesh were the common heritage of humanity all the world over, and that beneath the veneer of the western civilization there was much that was well to keep hidden in the name of decency.

## CHAPTER VI

### A HINDU SAINT VISITS RAWALPINDI

It was during these days that a distinguished man Swami Kailash Parbat, about 70 years old, hailing from southern India, halted at Rawalpindi for several months of the winter when on pilgrimage to Amar Nath, beyond Srinagar, Kashmere. I sat at the feet of this holy man for hours and hours. He received me always with a paternal smile and expressed delight at my long vigils. I stayed with him sometimes even till 1 A.M. and usually refused to accompany my parents who went back home as soon as the *sangat* dispersed, which generally happened at about 10 or 11 in the night. On these occasions I was escorted home or rather carried in the arms of a young disciple of whom there were about 20. I can never forget the loving care of this charming young *Sadhu* all the while we passed through the dark meandering lanes and by-paths leading to our house in the town. Poets and scholars have exhausted their talents in drawing a picture of a paradise but all these descriptions fall into insignificance before the sight of the gathering over which Swami Kailash Parbat presided. There were no didactic debates or discussions. Those of the *sangat* who had questions to put did so with due reverence, and the answers, too, were given with a simplicity and spontaneity that was simply catching. How truly the holy Guru says that the mere sight of a true saint is a real joy - *darshan bhetat hot nihal*.

The next distinguished visitor was Swami Sampat Giri, a man of repute and learning, who had a hundred followers with him, and attracted large houses. He stayed at Rawalpindi for a fairly long time. He was believed to be the greatest living Sanskrit scholar of those days. But his discourses were too abstruse to interest me.

## CHAPTER VII

### I MEET SWAMI DAYANANDA

The next distinguished visitor was Swami Dayananda Saraswati who had founded the Arya Samaj. He came to Rawalpindi as a propagandist in that behalf. The report about him, of course, from orthodox sources was that he was a spy of the *Kristani* (Christian) Government. I knew a good deal of Christians and Christianity, for I learnt my Bible lessons with interest and was thus a favourite of the then Manager of the Mission School, Reverend R. Thackwell, who himself took the Bible classes, but I did not know what a spy was and I was curious to know how he looked. So, accompanied by a class-fellow I went to Rao Sahib Sardar Sher 'Singh's *Kothi*, near the Sudder Bridge where Swami had stopped for the first few weeks, and on arriving there, I asked Swami Ishwarananda, who was a disciple and companion of Swami Dayanand and who afterwards became a close friend of mine, to let us have the *Darshan* of his *Guru*. He hesitated. Perhaps, he wondered what boys had to do there. But a voice from inside directed him to let us in. I fortified myself with all the courage I could command and recited some *Mantras* to guard myself against the malevolent look of the spy. But my surprise was great when I saw inside a strong, broad-chested, bulky, grown up man with a high head and shining and penetrating eyes, sitting on a mat with only a loin cloth round his waist. There was nothing malevolent in his look nor anything sinister about him. I felt I was a fool in associating anything evil in my mind with the figure in front of me. It at once became clear to me that a spy was after all not an evil spirit and that possibly the appellation connoted an individual who was anti-Brahman. There was, of course, nothing in him

of the dreamy mysticism I had learnt to associate with the name of *Sadhu*, a sort of the sanctimoniousness which suggested consciousness of a superiority or a desire to appear as a person not easy of access. On the contrary we saw before us a wide-awake man full of life and anxious to impart it to those who came across him.

He received our *firanam* warmly and bade us welcome. We seated ourselves at a respectful distance. We were mere boys, but Swami was not at a loss to find topics of conversation for us too. "Boys," enquired he, "are you betrothed or married?" We answered in the negative. He then advised us not to think of marriage till we were twenty-five years old. He then enquired whether we attended any school or college and on being told that we were students of the local American Presbyterian Mission High School, he suggested the reading of the book of Revelation. I do not remember anything else of that interview. In fact this was my first and last personal interview with Swami. I did attend any number of his lectures and debates in the *Kothi* of Rai Bahadur Sardar Sujan Singh in his garden outside the town, to which place he had shifted, and which was in fact the only decent building in the town where men of learning and religion were generally accommodated, and where also people religiously inclined could easily approach them; but there was so much noise in those gatherings that it would have been a miracle if I had derived any benefit from my attendance thereat. I only remember how proud Swami looked and how he commanded a hearing. It was the invariable practice with him to begin the proceedings at his place with a recitation of Gayatri *Mantra*. We all enjoyed his resonant intonation though none of us could understand Sanskrit. Swami himself seemed to enjoy his performance. No orchestra singer to my knowledge has been at greater pains to attune his instruments before he played upon them than did Swami. He stretched all his muscles to their fullest extent and took care that they lent their whole strength to enable him to give his performances necessary musical cadence.

One incident would suffice to show what sort of people attended his lectures. Once it was decided that there should be a

literary contest between Swami and the local Brahmans. The poor Sanatinists of Rawalpindi prided on the learning of the family *prohit* of Sardar Sujan Singh. This venerable old man had been to Benares and had some smattering knowledge of Sanskrit. It was simply preposterous on his part to have consented to compete with a comparatively young Brahman from Gujrat where Hindus were at home in Sanskrit.

Both the Sanatanists and the men who hailed Swami as their deliverer mustered in full force. But when Swami had done with his Gayatri and the Prohit stood up to address the gathering there was huge uproar, for the speech was interrupted by Swami's jeers and clappings. The admirers of Swami also clapped. The leading Sanatanists regarded this as an insult and they all walked out in disgust by way of protest. When I and the men belonging to my mohalla wended our way home, I asked an uncle of mine why Swami had clapped and thus given cause for offence. I was told that the *Prohit's* Sanskrit was incorrect. But no reply was forthcoming to my query when I asked why those who knew nothing of Sanskrit had joined Swamiji in that indecorous act. There could be, in fact, no justification for this discourtesy. "When you meet a saint," says the Holy Guru, "Listen to him and seek a solution of your doubts from him. But if you meet a person of the adverse type, say nothing." As all this was a strange experience to me, I felt no urge afterwards to attend Swami's congregations.

CHAPTER VIII

ARYA SAMAJ IN RAWALPINDI

But whether I willed it or not, my connection with the Arya Samaj movement did not stop there. A distant uncle of mine, Bhagat Kishan Chand, became vice-president of the Samaj, and a noted Sahukar was made president. Both these men were not men of religion. For several decades, therefore, the movement made BO headway in my town. As weekly meetings were held in a *baithak* of another uncle of mine, Bhagat Hiranand, for many years and as that was my *baithak* also, I was an unwilling attendant at most of the meetings of the Samaj. There was little to be learnt at these meetings. Swami Dayanand had declared a ban on Hindu *Shastras*. The term *Hindu* in his terminology stood for the word 'thief.' Brahmans were popes, used as an opprobrious term. As for Sikhs, they were according to him the followers of a *dambhi*, a cheat, the expression with which Swami remembered the first Sikh Guru in his book, the *Satyarth Prakash*. The only books of worship according to Swami were the Vedas. But they were written in Sanskrit, which nobody knew or understood. The weekly Samaj meetings were, therefore, a despair. A few pleaders and their Munshis together with stray visitors formed the only congregation. There was no one to perform divine service. A railway clerk, Pandit Shahzadanand, sang a few verses composed by himself. *Babu* Gopi Chand of the Post Office, a dwarfish but smooth tongued man, amused the audience with what he knew of the current topics. On occasions men from the mufassil came and did lecturing business, but they were not remarkable people and failed to attract anyone. It was here that I first made the acquaintance

of Pandit Lekh Ram of Kahuta, who was then employed in some Police office on Peshawar side, if I remember aright. He was an out and out anti-Muslim and he loved to indulge in invectives when lecturing on Islam or its founder. I wondered how men gathered courage to hear Pandit Lekh Ram's animadversions. And I was not surprised, when I learnt some years after, that he met a violent end at the hands of a Muslim fanatic at Lahore.

Trouble was always felt on account of the scarcity of speakers. Men good, bad or indifferent, were freely allowed to perform the work of learned divines. Any number of times I also, a mere school-boy, was asked to address weekly meetings. Years after I did consent to lecture and the theme I chose for my speech was : "To whom it befits to lecture." Needless to mention that I dwelt scathingly on this trifling with sacred institutions and observed that there should be no speeches if men were not available to deliver learned discourses. The speeches that were then delivered by men who knew little or nothing of religion or religious history and possibly did not lead clean lives in some cases, did more harm than good. Whether my remarks were received kindly, I am not aware. This much, however, I do know that never afterwards was I asked to say anything at the Samaj meetings. But in one way I am deeply indebted to the Arya Samaj and its founder. The few minutes' talk with Swamiji led me to study the Christian Bible with a critical eye and to form the habit of independent thinking. Again it was at the meetings of the Rawalpindi Arya Samaj that I came in contact with men like *Babu* Gopi Chand, wdio on retirement from service in the Postal Department took to banking, and with Lala Hans Raj Sahni, Vakil. Both these men were public spirited. The latter was a more cultured man, gentle, loving and lovable. Not only the Samaj of Rawalpindi owed him whatever success it achieved in the matter of the acquisition of its building and, later, in the establishment and maintenance of its High School. But I am speaking the bare truth when I say that he was the centrifugal force of the public life of the Hindu community of the town. Even the Musalmans respected him. The Sikhs loved and admired him, because, though a zealous Arya Samaj ist, he,



nevertheless, cherished great esteem for their holy Gurus. He contributed liberally to the expenses towards the celebration of the Sikh festivals and *Gur-purbs*. And whenever Sikh processions passed through his street he was invariably in his balcony with his wife and children with flowers and scented water in his hands which he lovingly sprinkled on them and his handsome face, all the while, beamed with joyful smiles which are still fresh in my memory and evoke an abiding feeling of love and regard for him.

## CHAPTER TX

### FAILURE AS A SCHOOL BOY

With all my advantages, however, I failed to pass the Departmental Middle School Examination. In fact I did not deserve success in it, for I had vowed not to learn Arithmetic from the teacher who was in charge of the subject in the school. The dear good man, God bless him ! did not know the subject himself ; but had the tact to let it appear that he was a competent teacher. I was the youngest in the class of about 20 or 25 boys. Two or three of my class-mates were grown up Vernacular Middle passed youngmen. One day the senior most of them said addressing the teacher, "Masterji let us learn *Tajarat* (practice) tomorrow." The Master nodded assent. I knew the meaning of the word *Tajarat* and on reaching home in the evening, I conveyed the glad tidings to my mother, and she, in her turn, passed on the news to my father when he came back from Katchery. Both of them rejoiced at the prospect of my learning the rules of commerce, for this they thought was meant by the teaching of *Tajarat* in the school. The next day when the Arithmetic period came, one boy dictated a sum of practice. And in a surprisingly short time nearly the whole class finished the sum and stood up, so that the teacher might come and see their working. When my turn came, my dear and esteemed teacher expressed great astonishment when he found that my slate was blank. And my astonishment, too, was not less great when, instead of instruction, I received two slaps on my cheeks. This way of introduction into the world of commerce, of course, did not appeal to me. I left attending the school. Days afterwards when Reverend Mr. Thackwell, Manager of the School, missed me, I was prevailed upon to resume attendance at school;

my revered teacher had to eat the humble pie by tendering me an abject apology. But though I consented to attend the school again I vowed that I would never learn anything from that teacher. I boycotted him and that, too, in a curious manner. It was a practice with him to assign a number of sums to be done at home daily. This work I entrusted to a Vernacular Middle passed class-mate, who had been raised to the dignity of a monitor by my dear teacher. An occasional present of a sweet cake was enough to ensure the monitor's good offices. Masterji contented himself by simply initialling the note-books and believed all the while that the work in my note book was mine. Thus the school year ended calmly. It was only when the Middle School results were out and I was refused promotion to the High Department of the school, that it became apparent to me that I had been a fool in boycotting the teacher and that instead of punishing him I had, in fact, punished myself. So, as the attendance at school was the only passport to life, and a school certificate was a sort of a diploma for securing a billet somewhere, I took to studying Arithmetic at home without anybody's assistance and was thus able to get through the Departmental test next year.

## CHAPTER X

### RUSTICATION THROUGH MISUNDERSTANDING

In the IV High Class, another calamity befell me. As already stated I was the cleverest boy in the Bible class. Well-grounded as I was in my own orthodox beliefs and knew almost everything that Hindu Puranic literature could impart, I followed with great interest the events described in both the Old and the New Testaments and showed so great a curiosity in knowing more about the deeds of the Jewish prophets and Christian Martyrs that my Headmaster, Babu Haradhan Ghosh, and the Manager of the School, Reverend C. B. Newton, actually doted on me. I was awarded a special stipend and was occasionally invited to their houses to receive gifts of precious books. Unfortunately for me, some impish persons in my class took it into their heads to make a cat's-paw of me in deceiving the school authorities. The Headmaster taught us history and English. Whenever my class-mates did not prepare their lessons, and not unoften such was the case, they would come to me and say, "Lachhman Singh, good man, will you keep the Headmaster occupied today so that he may have no opportunity to see that we have not done our work?" This appeal to my vanity was enough. I put question after question to the Headmaster, generally on Christian history. In his enthusiasm the Headmaster forgot how much time had been taken up in this manner and he continued talking till he was exhausted. This state of things could not last long. Time came when my stock of objections was exhausted and I wondered how I could any more oblige my mates in similar manner when, through a mere chance, my eyes fell on a list of books given in the columns of the *Theosophist*; the monthly organ of the Theosophical Society, published in Adyar,

Madras, under the editorship of a remarkable Russian woman, Madam Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, an American. It suggested itself to me that the book *Self-Contradictions of the Bible* from the pen of an American free-thinker, Ingersoll, must be one which should prove helpful in cornering the Headmaster during discussion on the Bible. Forthwith I wrote to the manager of the *Theosophist* to get me a copy. It took six months for the book to reach Rawalpindi from New York. It was the practice with the Manager, Reverend C.B. Newton, to receive all school dak and examine it before delivery to people for whom it was intended. The Manager was surprised when he saw that a student of his school had thought of indenting books from New York. And when on opening the packet he found that the book was from the pen of Ingersoll, whom he knew to be anti-Christ, he felt pained. He sent for me and admonished me for having thought of reading such a book which, observed he, encouraged unbelief and should be avoided by all right-minded persons. Though I had any number of times challenged Christian Missionary propaganda claiming that there was nothing very particularly good in Hindu and Sikh creeds, I was not anti-Christ and cherished no ill-will for Christians or their Christianity. Still, however, I could not resist the temptation of seeing the contents of the book the sight of which had upset my worthy Principal so much. By the next mail I wrote back to the *Theosophist* people asking them to get me two more copies of Ingersoll's book, saying that the previous one had been in a manner confiscated by the Christian Missionary in charge of the school.

Somehow the relations of the American Christian Missions with those of the *Theosophist* people, who were also Americans, were strained. At that time the Government had appointed an Education Commission, under the chairmanship of Sir William Hunter, to examine the system of education then in vogue and suggest how best it could be reformed. It appears that in connection with this enquiry an application from some Christian body for the control of high education was before the Government for consideration. To this proposal, the *Theosophist* people were strongly opposed and they wrote a leaderette in their journal in

which they observed that the transfer of high education to the Christian missionaries would be an extremely tyrannical act and would be resented by enlightened indigenous opinion from one end of the country to the other. In support of their contention they published my letter in extenso saying, "As a sample to the above we place before our readers a letter from a Hindu school-master of a Mission School in India which we have just received." A copy of the journal containing my letter with these remarks was sent to me and another to the Reverend Mr. C.B. Newton. I returned my copy with the remarks that it had been sent to me unasked for. I was not aware that it was a practice with respectable journals to send free copies to people to whom anything by way of comment in their journals was related. The Reverend Principal of the Mission High School opened his copy and was grieved to learn that what he had said to me so innocently should have formed a subject of newspaper controversy and he should have been made a target for criticism in such an influential journal of world-wide circulation. In that state of mind, he collected all the boys of the school and the school staff and in their presence regretted that the boy, whom successive managers and Headmasters had so much favoured and sought to advance, should have posed as a teacher of the school and, thus, told such a bold untruth to magnify a simple affair between the authorities of the school and himself into a grave public scandal. There were signs of deep concern on the faces of most of my school-fellows and teachers with whom I was very popular. Only two Sikh School-masters, one of them being my arithmetic master, already referred to in the foregoing pages, not only my teachers but also teachers of my own cousins, remarked that in their whole experience they had not seen such a vicious boy. I was given the choice to either offer an unqualified apology or consider myself rusticated from the school. As I had done nothing very particularly wrong and had not engineered any agitation I refused to offer any apology. I never signed myself as a teacher of the school. There was no boy or teacher of my name in the school and if I remember aright there was no other man bearing my name in the whole town. Hence I always signed

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myself Lachhman Singh, Mission High School, Rawalpindi, under the belief that letters addressed to me by name only would reach me all right as they always did. This is how the misunderstanding had been caused.

## CHAPTER XI

MUNICIPAL BOARD HIGH SCHOOL LAHORE  
SOME GREAT PEOPLE IN THE CITY

The only course left to me, therefore, was to leave the school, which I did and went to Lahore and was admitted into the Municipal Board High School. As this incident was an epoch-making period in my life, it is necessary that I should dwell on it at some length. Babu Avinash Chandra Mazumdar and Lala Chandu Lai, B.A., of the office of the District Traffic Superintendent, Rawalpindi, who attended the meetings of the Arya Samaj which, as already stated, held its meetings in the *baithak* of my uncles, and later in the *Kothi* of the late Sardar Tara Singh, Jagirdar and Honorary Magistrate, father-in-law of my cousin, Bhagat Ishwar Das, M.A., then Vakil in Rawalpindi and Vice-President of the Local Municipal Committee, had somehow become attached to me. When I proceeded to Lahore Babu Avinash gave me letters of introduction to Babu Nabin Chandra Rai, Registrar Punjab University and the president of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, and to Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri, Drawing Master of the Municipal Board High School and an influential member of the Lahore Brahmo Samaj. Lala Chandu Lai, likewise, gave me two notes of introduction, one to Lala Sain Das, Translator in the Lieutenant-Governor's Office and President of the Lahore Arya Samaj and the other to Lala Kesho Das, B.A., of the M.A. class, Government College, Lahore, who was a boarder, and who wielded not a small influence over his fellow boarders. Thus immediately after arrival at Lahore, I found myself intimately connected with its leading men.

## CHAPTER XII

## RECONCILED WITH REV. C.B. NEWTON

I am glad to be able to say that it was not many weeks after when the Reverend Mr. C.B. Newton met me at the Railway Station and no sooner did he see me than he ran to me and regretted his having been instrumental in my forced removal from Rawalpindi and in the deprivation of parental care, and of the affection of relatives and friends. He said he had come to understand on further consideration that I was not much to blame for the controversy started in the *Theosophist*. He observed further that he was desirous of making amends for what he had done. This he did with a generosity which simply surprised me. He introduced me to his father Dr. Newton, whose memory the Newton Hall attached to the Forman Christian College hostel still commemorates, and asked him to take fatherly interest in me. The old man interested himself so much in me that not unoften I visited him at his residence in Naulakha and stayed with him till 10 or 11 in the night during the winter of 1882. And when to this is added the fact that I had to walk back to 48, Court Street, which then served as Government College hostel, and where the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College Building now stands, and had to pass through the Railway Road, on both sides of which stood tall plantain trees, when it was pitch dark, and there was no habitation for about two miles, the depth of my regard for the venerable Doctor might be easily imagined. It was my endeavour to profit by these visits. Religion and religious history were then my chief rather only hobbies. I was in those days, engaged in reading Butler's *Analogy of Religion*. There were many abstruse points in the book. In the elucidation thereof the learned Doctor's great

knowledge and experience of a beautifully long lived life were of considerable help. Once, however, when he was explaining to me the cogency of pre-destination and Free-Will he seemed to me taking certain assumptions as correct which had actually to be proved, his wife about 80 years old and who was listening with interest to our passage-at-arms, interrupted him by saying, "No, Doctor, you seem to be wrong." And turning to me she observed, "Boy, there are many things beyond human comprehension. And this one comes under that head. I would be content with the little that I do comprehend and ask for more light through prayer rather than by didactic disputations." Need I say that I felt staggered at this sincere avowal of that angelic lady of the effort of the frail man to dive into depths beyond his reach. The Sikh Holy Scriptures, also, dwell on the vanity of this attempt to probe into the mysteries of the cosmos. "How can a child", they say, "know of its parents' birth?" Still, however, philosophic enquiry has been to me the chief pastime or rather delight. And as I observed to my young friend Mr. Dwarka Deesh, Assistant Surgeon, in charge of the Civil Hospital, New Delhi, wherein I lay confined during the months of January and February, 1933, owing to a fracture of my right thigh-bone, and when I was engaged in the study of the *Philosophy of Upnishads* and was enjoying the author Sir Radhakrishnan's baffling endeavour to see consistency and harmony in the diversity of theories, set forth by the learned Hindu savants of yore to trace the inter-connection of body, mind and soul with the Primeval Being, from whom again everything is alleged to have proceeded, in reply to his question what interested me in the study of the book and that he endeavoured in vain to follow Sir Radhakrishnan in the labyrinths of his philosophic enquiry, but had failed to follow him, the pleasure lies in seeking and not in attainment. "Seeking is life while attainment is death." Qais lived all the while when he was talking of his beloved Laila and dreaming of her. He wandered over hill and dale and forests and deserts in search of her. The spark of life lay unextinguished under the scorching heat of the sun and the bitter cold of the night, when he lay in the open, and the wolf

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and the tiger and other wild animals of the jungle playfully shook him as if he was a dead skeleton. But when at length, his Laila did come and implored him to cast a glance at her he opened his eyes and lo ! his spirit flew away at the sight of his beloved. So satiation is mental and spiritual death, though it might not be perceptible to the naked eye.

## **CHAPTER XIII**

### **BIRTH OF SINGH SABHA MOVEMENT**

It was about this time that need was felt for an organisation that should voice true public opinion and watch the Sikh Panthic interests. Thus was born the Singh Sabha Movement.

Sardar Bikrama Singh of Kapurthala Royal Family and another chief of the same name who ruled over Faridkot gathered a number of public spirited and learned men around them and with their help held meetings at Amritsar and Lahore and other places to muster forces for an all-round Panthic uplift. These efforts were, however, all sporadic and, therefore, failed to achieve much. It was really given to the son of a servant of Kanwar Bikrama Singh of Kapurthala, the late Bhai Gurmukh Singh, a teacher in the Oriental College, Lahore, to effectively organize the community and achieve great results. I shall refer to his work later on in these pages.

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CHAPTER XIV

FRIENDSHIP WITH ARYA SAMAJ AND  
BRAHMO SAMAJ LEADERS

Lala Sain Das, President of the Lahore Arya Samaj, was a highly respectable and patriotic individual and much of the success of the Lahore Samaj was due to his ability and integrity. His kindness of manner and sincerity of disposition attracted any number of youngmen towards him, whom he filled with the desire to serve the mother country. To me he was particularly kind and several times he invited me to his place. The Vice-President of the Samaj, Lala Jeewan Das, an enthusiastic reformer of a deal of influence was also not less fond of me. In this Samaj, too, I also formed valuable friendships ; but notwithstanding all this, something in the Samaj, possibly its narrow sympathies and the wrangling mentality of its moving spirits, repelled me.

This was not the case, however, with my connection with the Lahore Brahmo Samaj. Babu Navin Chandra, its President, was an intellectual man of a unique personality. By his learning and scholarship and by his wide and liberal sympathies, he had made the Samaj a centre of attraction for all youngmen who were for harmony and accord and who had no faith in the efficacy of the attempts for the regeneration of India by the building of a national creed on the debris of the dead and decadent ancient beliefs, mostly based on superstition and idolatrous rituals. The Brahmo Samaj stood for this liberalism. Hence to belong to the Brahmo Samaj or to rank amongst its sympathizers was to belong to the intellectual aristocracy of Lahore. The Brahmo Samaj Mandir was, thus, the only place where one could hope to meet Indians of

advanced views on religion and social reform. It was in this *Mandir* that Pundit Shiv Narain Agnihotri, later founder of the Dev Samaj, earned name and fame as a powerful speaker. Here it was that the rising educated gentry of the Punjab Hindus received inspiration from such eminent personages as Babu, afterwards Sir, Surendra Nath Bannerji and Babu Pratap Chandra Mazumdar and any number of other men of renown. Mr. John Bright, a Liberal Statesman and a Member of British Parliament, is said to have remarked that few Englishmen could speak English like Pratap Babu. But to me he was a prototype of old Rishis. Poetry flowed from his lips like honey. It was a joy to look at his tall and handsome figure. His radiant smile captivated the hearts of youngmen who thronged in the Brahmo Samaj Mandir and listened to his orations with rapturous delight. I am glad that it should have been my proud privilege to arrange for the presentation of an address to him. A deputation of the Punjabi youngmen, then receiving instruction in the Lahore colleges, headed by my friends, Pundit Harkishen Das, M.A., of Gujranwala, later a sub-judge in the Punjab Judiciary, Pundit Madho Ram, M.A., of Ambala, later leader of the Ambala Bar, whose life was one long record of public activity, specially in the matter of University reform, and Rai Sahib Khushi Ram, M.A., of the Punjab Educational Service, all of them now dead, waited upon the distinguished visitor to express their gratitude for his making it convenient to visit Lahore and to so ably expound the doctrines of the Theistic Church. I frequently visited him at his lodging place during both his visits.

## CHAPTER XV

### PRATAP CHANDRA MAZUMDAR ON SWAMI DAYANANDA'S MISSION

It was during one of these visits that I learnt from Pratap Babu how Swami Dayananda Saraswati, founder of the Arya Samaj, during his visits to Calcutta broached to Babu Keshab Chandra Sen, founder of the New Dispensation branch of the Brahmo Samaj, the idea of inculcating belief in the revelation of the Vedas and, thus, uniting the Hindus under the Vedic banner. I had heard from several leading Arya Samajists, politically inclined, attributing such a motive to the great founder of the Arya Samaj. Babu Pratap Chandra's personal evidence confirmed my belief in the correctness of the popular report. I know there were men in the Arya Samaj who resented attributing such a motive to their revered leader. Even now, there might be men holding such a view. But I have never been able to see much beauty in such an attitude. If the Swami's opponents intended to insinuate that such an innuendo would in any way lower him in popular estimation they must have soon realised that they were mistaken. It must have had quite the contrary effect, for it implied a burning zeal for the uplift of the Hindu race—a lofty patriotism, which subordinated all considerations to the one predominant and irresistible aim of seeing the Hindus restored to the position their great Aryan ancestors occupied in times of yore. In this aim the Swami pre-eminently succeeded. The whole of northern India was leavened with his spirit.

In the Punjab and North West Frontier Province particularly, where nearly three and a half centuries of sustained

efforts at reform by the holy Sikh Gurus and their disciples had already demolished Brahmanical strongholds, the Hindus who, generally had come to view things with a liberal outlook and yearnt for self-expression, hailed the Swami as their deliverer.\* These people were now able to meet under the Swami's banner. Through

\* I am glad the Principal of the Gurukul, Hardwar, agrees with me in the above view. In his tribute to the memoir of Baba Nanak in the *Gurpunima* issue of the *Mauji*, Amritsar, he recognizes the indebtedness of the talented founder of the Arya Samaj to the work of the Sikh Gurus. I was simply surprised when I read such an encomium from a leading member of the Gurukul Section of the Arya Samaj, whose rank and file had, a few decades before, carried on a virulent propaganda against the teaching of the Gurus. Swami Dayananda himself, neither in his speeches nor writings, ever made such an admission. On the contrary he recklessly attacked Baba Nanak in his book, the *Satyarth Prakash*. I am told in his defence that what he wrote was under the inspiration of the late Bhai Jawahar Singh, then a leading member of the Lahore Arya Samaj and a son of a *Granthi* in the Golden Temple, Amritsar. Even if this version be correct, I am afraid it does not absolve Swami Dayanand's guilt in questioning the integrity of the founder of Sikhism without having first-hand knowledge of Sikh Scriptures and Sikh history. Little wonder, therefore, that each and every member of the Samaj should have in those days (I am talking of the later eighties) made extravagant claims regarding their share in the spiritual regeneration of the Punjab. Somehow I had acquired a strong dislike for the Arya Samaj propaganda. Hence it was that much of my time, which ought to have been spent in my education, was taken up with anti-Arya Samaj propaganda, partly encouraged by Punjabi Brahmo acquaintances whom I, later, learnt to equally dislike for their pedantic claims. Though otherwise esteemable and fine gentlemen, they lacked the earnestness and zeal of their co-religionists in Bengal and I wonder if any one would have noticed their existence, but for the princely bequests of Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia which keep them in public eye. My contributions were widely read. Some of them were published in a pamphlet form by the late Dr. Henry Martyn Clarke, a Christian Medical Missionary of Amritsar. As stated elsewhere, I destroyed all the 500 copies of my share of the publication under the influence of Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla, a company promoter, an act for which I later felt very much sorry.

[ Continued on the next page.

their educational propaganda and banking and industrial institutions, they have now acquired an influence which is one to count with.

*Continued from the last page.*

In the winter of 1935, however, a friend came across a copy. This I intend publishing again just to give a bird's-eye view of the activities of our public men of those times. Of my letters on kindred topics published in the *Indian Magazine* of London, edited by the late Miss Manning, who spent a whole life time in the advocacy of Indian Reform movement, one has been mislaid. The other will form the part of the revised pamphlet, edited by Dr. Martyn Clarke. The reader will notice my strong predilections on matters Sikh, though I was not a baptized Sikh those days.

## CHAPTER XVI

### BENGAL'S DEBT TO PUNJAB

My stay in Lahore as a student from the summer of 1882 to 1889 is full of events. During this period I witnessed the awakening of the Punjab population, Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims, all under the direct influence of Western education and the noble part played by the American Presbyterian Mission, and then by a band of men of light and lead from the United Provinces and Bengal who made Lahore their home and contributed immensely to popular uplift. To the former category belong Lala Harsukh Rai, proprietor of the *Koh-i-Noor* newspaper and press in the Sheranwala Gate, and Pandit Gopi Nath and his brother of the *Akhbar-i-Am*. Lala Harsukh Rai had some connection with the Nawal Kishore Press in Lucknow, the leading indigenous press in Northern India. His education and culture and public spirit were a great asset to the men associated with the work of the Sabha and of the Anjuman-i-Punjab, which, later, launched and carried out the scheme of the founding of the Punjab University. I came to know him through my deceased friend, Lala Nathu Ram Nand, under whose able editorship the *Koh-i-Nur* became a powerful organ of public opinion. I occasionally contributed to its columns.

Pundit Gopi Nath and his brother were much younger men and through their organ, the *Akhbar-i-Am*, they furthered the cause of public weal for several decades. Among the men of letters in those days the favourites were Babu Kanhaiya Lai Alakhdhari and my esteemed Professor the late Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad of blessed memory.

But by far the greater asset to the cause of the mass

uplift in the province were a batch of distinguished Bengali gentlemen who came to settle in Lahore, and who actually formed the vanguard of public life in Lahore. Of these the most eminent were Babu Pratui Chandra Chatterji, Kali Prosano Roy, Jogindra Chandra Bose and Nabin Chandra Rai. The first three were distinguished members of the Lahore Bar. Hon'ble Babu P.C. Chatterji retired as a Judge of the Chief Court. Babu K.P. Roy rose to the position of a leader of the Lahore Bar and Babu J.C. Bose, besides his other useful activities, interested himself in the success of the *Tribune* newspaper, of which he was appointed Superintendent by its founder Sardar Dyal Singh Majeethia, who later bequeathed his whole estate worth several lakhs of rupees for public weal and to whose beneficence the Dyal Singh College, the Dyal Singh Public Library and the *Tribune* Trust, owe their existence. Babu Nabin Chandra Rai was Registrar of the Punjab University for a long time. As President of the Punjab Brahmo Samaj, he wielded a good deal of influence on the youth of the Punjab. Any number of my friends were indebted to him in the matter of their spiritual and educational advancement.

Babu Jogindra Chandra I personally knew. I had known him ever since I was a boy. As an ardent reader of the *Anrita Bazar Patrika*, I had come to have a sincere regard for Bengal and its people. Bengal had given birth to great men like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Babu Keshab Chandra Sen, *Maharishi* Devendra Nath Tagore, Babu Pratap Chandra Mazumdar and a host of other notables like Babu, afterwards Sir, Surendra Nath Bannerji, who shone like bright stars in the political India of that day. I was too young to come in personal contact with either Babu K. P. Roy or Hon'ble Justice Chatterji, but a mere chance was responsible for my rather intimate contact with Bose Babu. When I saw him in his office in Anarkali Bazar, Lahore, for the first time he recognised me as the boy who, a couple of years back, had remitted something like eighty rupees through the Editor, the *Tribune*, in response to an appeal for the flood-stricken people in Bengal. This small amount I had collected from the workmen engaged in building a bridge on the Jhelum

## BENGAL'S DEBT TO PUNJAB

river at Chak Nizam, opposite the town of Haranpore. I had gone there on a visit to my class-fellow and friend Mathura Das of Attock. When there, I read of the havoc done by floods in the overland edition of the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*. I took a cutting from the paper, and attached it to an appeal which I had myself drafted. The first person whom I approached with the appeal was an old Scot Sub-Engineer in charge of the local workshop. He read the appeal but expressed his inability to give anything. His people in Scotland, said he, were very poor. If he had any money to spare he would remit it to them. But he shook hands with me and wished me success. I then sought the help of the Sikh *mistri* who was in receipt of Rs. 80/- per mensem and with whom I had picked some acquaintance. I thought he would gladly respond to the appeal, but the dear fellow stared at me amazingly and shook his head. The next man to be approached was a Mussalman blacksmith. He was in receipt of only Rs. 30/- per mensem as salary and had only 30 coolies to work under him. He heard me sympathetically and gladly offered a day's earnings for the cause. He did more, he called on his men to offer the prayer for welfare and follow his example. All the men reverently raised their hands and said *Amen*. And as if this was not enough, he volunteered to accompany me to several groups of labourers who were engaged in sinking *Kothis* (piers of the bridge). He procured a *Macchua*, a small boat, and visited all the labour gangs. The influence of my companion was simply wonderful. He would only alight on the sand bags, say a few words into the ears of the coolies—all Muslims. They all cheerfully agreed to part with their day's earnings. Thus placing something like rupees 50 in my hands, my friend suggested to me to see the young European Assistant Engineer of Haranpore, who had the reputation of being a pious Christian. I proceeded to this Officer's bungalow. I was a good looking, well-clad boy. The orderly gave me a chair and politely asked me to wait for the *Sahib* who, he said, was out, but was expected back every moment. But when the man came to learn the nature of my visit, he turned his back on me and disappeared. A few minutes later a handsome young officer rode in and alighting from his pony he came straight

to me and enquired what had brought me to his place. He read the appeal and like the aforesaid Scot Sub-Engineer he complained he was poor, but he forthwith took a five-rupee currency note and slipped it into my hands, apologizing all the while in pleasing accents that still ring into my ears. Delighted at my success I was about to enter into the office of the friend with whom I was putting up when I espied two European officers. One of them, I came to know later, was Mr. Wynn, a small dignified man, the Engineer in charge of the whole work. His companion was a Napier, a tall well-knit man, believed to be a descendant or some relation of Lord Napier of Magdala, who had conquered Sind for the British. I approached them. Mr. Napier read the appeal and wondered why I, a Punjabi boy, should have interested myself in a people so far away. But Mr. Wynn snatched the appeal from him and wrote in blue pencil "Cashier, pay Rs. 5/-". As I was about to enter my place, the Scot Sub-Engineer beckoned me to go and see him. He was so glad at my success that he at once took out five rupees from his pocket and added the amount to my treasure. Small though the incident is, I confess the memory of it brightens and exhilarates me. My heart particularly goes to the Mussalman blacksmith who had so sincerely and warmly joined me in the work. It is a thousand pities that I never met him again and had no chance to serve him in any way which from my station in life I would have easily done. It is men like him who lend whatever beauty there is in mankind.

## CHAPTER XVII

### I REFUSE NAIB TEHSILDARSHIP

As I have already observed, I had ample opportunities to witness the pluck and energy of British administrators, having been born and bred up in a frontier district, but there was something in their general deportment which created a sort of aversion in my mind against entering Government Service. Once the Principal of the Government College, Lahore, was asked to suggest the name of a student of his College for appointment as translator in the Lahore Chief Court (now called High Court of Judicature). The name of my friend, the late Pandit Madho Ram, B.A., of Ambala was proposed for the appointment but he refused the offer for he had decided to take to the profession of law. I was asked if I would care to accept the billet, but the idea did not appeal to me, possibly because the job was merely a clerical one. The second occasion was when my beloved cousin, *Rai Bahadur* Bhagat Narain Das, M.A., took me to Mr. S.S. Thorburn, Commissioner of the Rawalpindi Division, and asked for my nomination as a Naib Tehsildar. The Commissioner was favourably impressed by my conversation and demeanour and appeared to be willing to accede to the request, particularly because it was supported by Mr., afterwards Sir, Denzil Ibbetson, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, then Deputy Commissioner of Gujranwalla who happened to be at that time on visit to Mr. Thorburn. He had a great regard for my revered cousin, but I threw cold water on the scheme by saying plainly that I was not sure I could learn riding. Really the idea failed to appeal to me. I had seen with my own eyes Tehsildars and Naib Tehsildars insulted by British subalterns, when engaged in providing supplies on their march to Frontier

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expeditions, big or small. Again the starting pay of the post of Naib Tehsildars was miserably low, only Rs. 30/- per mensem. I wonder how these little minions in authority managed to eke out a living on this low pittance. I, for one, saw little beauty in having to live on such low emoluments, considering that as a student in Lahore for several years I could hardly live on less than Rs. 40/- per mensem. I know there were fellow-boarders who lived there even on Rs. 20/- per mensem or thereabouts; but their lot was certainly not enviable. I could not help forming a poor opinion of the good people who in their wisdom first fixed this rate of pay for men occupying positions of such responsibility, though for men of their own extraction they have provided on a lavish scale. Perhaps their Indian advisers belonged to the species whose intense loyalty European writers never fail to remember with unstinted admiration. When saying this I have in mind the little episode of the early days of the rule of the East India Company in Madras when the Indian Sepoys are said to have given rice meal to their British comrades in arms and contented themselves subsisting on mere gruel.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### DAYS OF TRUANCY IN LAHORE

I have forgotten to mention here that my stay at Lahore from the autumn of 1881 to 1889 with the exception of the few months of the year 1884, when I again joined the Mission High School, Rawalpindi, was of little avail to me from the academic point of view. My precocious development had turned my head and made me forget that I was in Lahore primarily for my educational progress. Most of my time I devoted in helping the leading men of Lahore in their public activities. Leaders are nobodies if they have no followers. Being Anglicized in their general outlook, they could not attract the mass of their countrymen. The public gatherings convened by them, therefore, mostly consisted of school boys and college students. And as somehow I happened to wield a deal of influence over my school and college fellows, I was of no small help in bringing youngmen together to swell public audiences. Full two or three winter nights, I remember, I and my college chums spent in posting placards on the walls of Lahore city inviting people to attend important gatherings. I read any number of books but not those forming part of my school and college curriculum. The result was that I took five years to get through my Matriculation examination. I failed to pass my Intermediate Examination and twice I failed in the Teachership Certificate examination. My indulgent father continued to supply me with funds all these years. This unique parental care I have gratefully remembered throughout my life. My two younger brothers Bhagat Gokal Chand and Bhagat Balmukand were, however, easily able to pass through these so-called University tests, but they were unfortunately cut off very young. Bhagat Gokal Chand, B.A.,

after distinguishing himself as a professor of Mathematics in the Gordon Mission College, Rawalpindi, was taken into the Educational Department and appointed Headmaster of the Government High School, Rawalpindi. He would have easily risen to the topmost ladder in his cadre, had life permitted it. He died before he was forty. All the educational institutions were closed in his honour and it was no small consolation to me to notice the Principal and the Professors of the Gordon College among the mourners as the cortege passed through the main bazar and was taken to the Tapo Ban for cremation. The Teachers' Association founded a scholarship to perpetuate his memory.

My youngest brother, Bhagat Balmokand, B.A.,LL.B., was an ideal brother, love incarnate. But he too fell ill when he was hardly thirty years of age. The best medical aid in the province failed to cure his malady. Babur saved his son Humayun by circumambulating round his bed, and praying that the angel of death might take him away instead. I prayed, likewise, but the angel paid no heed to my entreaties and struck me a blow poignancy of which I can never cease to feel. The dear deceased was a model son. He lived at the distance of over a mile from our house. Daily after returning from the Kutchery he visited our old father to shampoo him and receive his blessings. Perhaps a brother never loved a brother as he loved me. His handsome figure, sweet speech and winning manners captivated all hearts. As a scholar of Sanskrit he acquired great eminence and his eloquent discourses on the *Upnishadas* and *Ramayana* and *Mahabharada* drew big houses. He was such a devoted husband that despite my repeated appeals he would not segregate his consumptive wife. Of the suite of his apartments, the best he gave to his wife with the result that he soon followed her. Out of respect to his memory, Gordon Mission College, Mission High School and D.A.-V. High School were closed. The funeral procession, consisting of friends and relatives, members of the Bar in a solid phalanx, the staff of the aforesaid schools and the college as also Bhajan Mandlis of the Arya Samaj, Sanatan Dharam Sabha and the Kirtan parties of the several Sikh temples in a procession

several furlongs long bore testimony to the popularity of my angelic brother. And it was no small consolation to us that the dear departed should have earnt so much popularity and regard, though so young. I dedicated my book *The Life of Guru Govind Singh* to him so that, his memory may also be cherished. For the same reason I dedicated my *Sikh Martyrs* to his two daughters. My younger niece was a wonder. She was only five years old when she quietly passed away in the lap of her grandmother. She was sedate and calm like an old lady and talked likewise. Her memory was so astonishingly good that a couple of days before her death she surprised us all by reciting the whole of the long song *Tun A mil Kalgian-walia* which she had heard being sung in her room by some ladies from Amritsar. Her elder sister was an angel like her father and we were greatly distressed when it pleased God to take her to heaven only a short while after her marriage.



## CHAPTER XIX

### SAVED FROM DEATH

I have not mentioned a few more incidents relating to the period of my long stay at Lahore. Though a school-boy, I was lodged with L. Kesho Das, M.A. student in the Government College Boarding house. Soon I got disgusted with the food provided and mostly lived on freshly prepared *puris* and sweets from the College confectioner. This spoiled my digestion and to save myself from further trouble I made my own cooking arrangements in a room placed at my disposal through the kindness and courtesy of the College Boarding House Superintendent, Lala Sardari Lai. It was in these days that through the neglect of my servant who had placed some quantity of a purgative sent by Lala Guranditta Mai, House Surgeon, in the medicine box of Lala Fateh Chand, a medical student and a friend of my cousin Bhagat Ishar Das, left in my custody. I mistakenly took out a bit of paper containing 30 grains of strychnia in the box and swallowed it. It was an extremely bitter thing. Immediately I felt a choking sensation in the throat and cried out to Mahla Ram, brother-in-law of my guardian, Lala Kesho Das, that I had taken some deadly poison. He ran to my guardian and apprised him of the fact. All was hurry and bustle in the hostel. About half a dozen graduates carried me in their arms to the Mayo Hospital. I had hoped that my friend Baldev Singh, V Year student, and Lala Guranditta Mai would be there to look after me. But it being Sunday and time about one O'clock in the afternoon, no one was in the hospital. My guardian seated me on a bench lying in a verandah and ran hither and thither to look for some one who could inform the physicians

concerned. But as I was losing consciousness, I shrieked upon which he returned and placed my head in his lap whereupon I swooned. I do not know how long after it was that I felt I was surrounded by dozens of men and heard earnest conversation as to how I had come to take the poison. A voice expressed some doubt in my guardian's statement. This evidently meant danger to him, and as I loved him truly and strongly I struggled to open my eyes and speak. I succeeded. My eyes opened, but I could not speak. Some one asked me if I had taken the drug myself. I nodded 'Yes'. I then heard congratulatory expressions. I again swooned and did not gain consciousness till late in the night when I saw my guardian lying with me in the same miserable hospital bed. I was grateful for this, but it was a pitiable sight—a youngman conscious of his handsome physique, who loved to strut like a peacock with measured steps, seen in a hospital bed provided with rough blankets. But there were more surprises in store for me. I was told that the Chemical Examiner, Doctor Centre, took special interest in my case. He visited me any number of times during the day and sat by my bedside till late in the night. For four or five days I lay in the hospital. The first day he was with me till 9 p.m. The nights were wintery but this did not prevent him from visiting me again and again. On learning that my father was only a low paid Munshi in the Rawalpindi District Kutchery, he forbade any message being sent lest he might be put to unnecessary expense and trouble if he came to visit me, but, later, when he found that my condition was dangerous, he allowed the despatch of a telegram. My poor dear father swooned and fell down on the receipt of the message and thus missed the train. It was on the third day that he and my dear mother arrived. What a consolation it must have been to them to see me lovingly attended upon by my fellow-boarders who were all fond of me ! My Headmaster, Mr. Staines, and my revered secondmaster, Babu Chandu Lai, who loved me as if I were their own child, were also at my bedside for most of the time. As I dragged along for days it was believed that I was out of danger; but on the fourth day I developed fever. Doctor Center was with me.

Here I might mention that the evening previous to my, swallowing the poison I happened to notice big placards posted all over the Mall and in the Lawrence Gardens announcing the convening of a meeting in the Montgomery Hall wherein Europeans and Anglo-Indians were to protest against the Criminal Law Amendment Bill introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council by the Law Member, Mr. John Ilbert. As I have said in the foregoing pages, I was a newspaper reader ever since my boyhood, and was, therefore, well informed about what was going on in the political world. I knew that Europeans and Anglo-Indians were strongly opposed to the grant of Self-Government to the Indian people and that anti-Indian resolutions would be passed at this meeting. In rage I took out my red pencil and wrote at the bottom of every poster, "Damned nonsense." Subsequently I learnt that Doctor Center was one of the speakers at this meeting and that he had either moved or supported the resolution for the recall of the then Viceroy, Lord Rippon, for his crime of being a pro-Indian. It may be imagined how my mind was worked up that night and the following morning. When my fever was high, I turned in my bed; off and on and strongly denounced the conveners of the aforesaid meeting and prayed for the advent of the conditions when the enemies of Indian freedom would be made to leave India bag and baggage. Over forty youngmen, graduates and under-graduates, were then standing by. I subsequently learned from my friend, Pandit Harkishan Das, M.A., of Gujranwala, that most of them, were greatly alarmed lest Doctor Center might take umbrage at my fulminations and leave me to my fate. But the good man reading, what was passing in their minds told them to have no fear and assured them that he would do his duty to me unmindful of my political opinions. And this he did. Thanks to his skill, I got over my trouble and was fit enough in a week's time to be carried to Rawalpindi, my home. On my return to Lahore, I saw him at his house, he was Civil Surgeon of Lahore then, and I presented him with a valuable present as a token of gratitude from my father. But the good Doctor refused to accept the present. Instead he wrested a promise from me to visit him now and then which

observed he, would be a delight to him. In fact he hailed me, whenever I met him, with a hearty welcome and his face beamed with joy, and naturally enough, for I was a living proof of his unrivalled skill as a physician.

## CHAPTER XX

### SIKHS SECEDE FROM ARYA SAMAJ

To my school days are related two more incidents of historic interest. One was the thoughtless attack on the holy Sikh Gurus by Arya Samajist fire-brands at an annual meeting of the Arya Samaj in their Mandir in Wachhowali which led to the secession from the Samaj of Bhai Jawahir Singh, its Vice-President, and of his friends Bhai Dit Singh Gyani, who was a forceful writer, and Bhai Maya Singh, who was both an eloquent speaker and writer of marked ability. Not a word was said in protest at the large gathering by any responsible person. On the contrary there was a loud cheering. This exasperated these Sikh workers in the Samaj, who had been lulled into the belief that the mission of Swami Dayananda was identically the same as that of the Sikh Gurus. Bhai Gurmukh Singh Gyani, the great Sikh leader, welcomed these three men of dynamic personalities, Jawahir Singh, Dit Singh and Maya Singh, with open arms. The result was a tremendous gain to the Sikh community. Bhai Gurmukh Singh's hands were greatly strengthened and the Singh Sabha movement began to make giant-like rapid strides. The foundation was then laid of the Khalsa Diwan Lahore. The Singh Sabhas were established in all big towns in the Punjab and were affiliated to the Lahore Diwan. A press was purchased with the gift of the Maharaja of Nabha, Sir Heera Singh, and a well conducted journal in Punjabi, the *Khalsa Akhbar*, was started under the able editorship of Bhai Dit Singh Gyani, who also wrote dozens of books to illumine the popular mind and successfully infused a feeling of pride into the mass of the community for their great Gurus and their creed of love and harmony. Bhai Jawahir Singh

was the most learned Sikh of his time. Bhai Maya Singh proved a devoted worker. He possessed great organizing capacity and busied himself in lecturing and pamphleteering.

The other incident refers to the visit of Babu Surendra Nath Bannerji, the great Bengal leader in connection with his first political campaign in the Punjab. His fame had preceded him and wherever he went people mustered in force to hear and acclaim him. I was then in Rawalpindi and was still in bed on account of after-effects of the poison I had taken in Lahore. I wanted to attend the meeting and hear the great Indian orator. My parents would not let me go. My protests and cries attracted Bhagat Heera Nand, my uncle. He ordered a palanquin and accompanied me to the meeting which was held in the Garden of Rai Bahadur Sardar Sujan Singh. My friend Babu Avinash Chandra Mazumdar, the organizer of the meeting, joyfully welcomed me and seated me on the dais from where I could easily hear Surendra Babu. The address was a great performance and it lasted for about two hours. I found it difficult to follow the worthy lecturer although I could well understand English owing to my close association with American Missionaries and British officers from childhood upwards. I could not further understand why the illustrious visitor should have continued talking so much that he felt it necessary to take sips from a glass of water any number of times in the course of his speech. I subsequently learnt that public speaking was an art and that distinguished British statesmen like William Gladstone, British Liberal Premier, and equally distinguished Mr. John Bright, M.P., harangued for several successive nights on great occasions. I amusingly noticed on this occasion that most of the men who participated in vociferations on the occasion did so without understanding that was being said, just as over a decade back a similar gathering in the same place had cheered the great Swami Dayananda, when he was haranguing in Sanskrit<sup>1a</sup> a public debate with Sanatanists, a language which was Greek to the citizens of Rawalpindi in those days. Be that as it may, I benefited from my attendance at the meeting. A sense of pride filled my mind at the thought that my country possessed such men

of light and lead who had such a marvellous command over the English language. The whole scene electrified me, so much so that I left my bed and returned to Lahore to resume my vagrant literary pursuits for I read anything and everything that caught my fancy, but not school text books.

## CHAPTER XXI

### PINDLCOMMISSIONER'S INTEREST IN ME

To this period also relates my acquaintance with Mr. H.E. Perkins, Commissioner of Rawalpindi Division, about which I have already referred in the foregoing pages and which afforded me some amusing experiences. Somehow he felt a liking for me. I was yet reading in the IX standard. There was no Resident in Kashmere at that time. The Punjab Government then carried on correspondence with the Maharajah through the Commissioner, Rawalpindi Division, who was *thus* a *persona grata* with Maharaja Ranbir Singh. He gave me a letter to His Highness suggesting my appointment as an English Interpreter on Rs. 100/- per mensem. My father, however, did not favour the idea. He had heard of Punjabis quietly removed by a dose of poison and feared lest I might meet the same fate. So I had to go back to Lahore for higher education.

He was, however, helpful to me in several ways. Once when I was outcast for daring to partake of *Kichauries* (wheat cakes cooked in boiling ghee) cooked by a Hindu *Halwai* out of the hand of a Musalman class-mate of my own district. The news spread in the town that I had turned a Muhammadan, There was a *Siapa* (beating of breasts) in the family and I was regarded as good as dead. I had no other course left but to proceed to Lahore and seek shelter with some friends there. But this was not for long. My playmates from my town brought me back and undertook to protect me. One of the small springs on the river Leh was built by me. Every year after the rains I got it repaired and made fit for use. Every morning before dawn I went there to bathe. Now

that I was regarded as an untouchable, the use of the spring was forbidden to me.

The old priest of a big Sikh Sardar who was worshipping his idols at the brink of the spring would not allow me to approach it. This enraged my companions. The old man was given a ducking for what was regarded as an insult to me. The next morning the Brahman's grandson, a stout youngman, waylaid my companions and assaulted them. He was hauled up before the court of the Tehsildar, Sardar Bishen Singh, and was awarded a short term of imprisonment which on appeal was commuted by the Commissioner to a fine of ten rupees.

Once as I passed through a narrow street in company with half a dozen friends and held a basket full of sweets which we had to partake of in the Municipal Garden, a big Sanatanist Sardar, who was a contractor, was also proceeding in the same direction along with a small party of influential citizens. In his endeavour to avoid touch with me only succeeded in shouldering me whereupon I let the basket slip from my hands. The *Laddus* (sweets) rolled down in the street much to the disgust and anger of my companions who were, thus, denied a hearty picnic. But my mirthful repartee softened them down and called out a hearty laughter! when I observed that the dear sweet *Laddus* had become contaminated by a contractor's touch and were no longer fit to be eaten. The Sardar smiled and wended on his way but some of his men looked upon me with wolfish eyes and it seemed as if the good puritan's minions would swallow me if they could.

All these days, the doors of my parental house were open to me, but I was served food outside the *Chaunka*. Even this amenity was not acceptable to an uncle of mine who somehow bore me ill-will. He wrote to the Secretary of the Brahman Sabha to suggest some penance with a view to my admission into my caste. The man prescribed twenty days' fast in addition to a bath in the Ganges. Unfortunately for the Secretary, however, his son was my friend. He confessed to his father that he had shared my bed and meals any number of times. This served as a smasher. My uncle's letter was ignored, and in the course of time the agitation!

against me subsided. But I dared not attend the meetings of Sanatanists who were fellow-thinkers of my parents. This difficulty also was removed. One day as I was taking my father's lunch to the Kutchery, Reverend Mr. Heron, Manager of the Mission High School, who doted on me, saw me passing in front of his bungalow and on learning where I was going entrusted me with a letter to Mr. Perkins. And as I was coming out of the latter's library room, the afore-mentioned Sardar was announced. The Commissioner was introducing me to him and saying that I was a pupil of his friend Reverend Mr. Heron, when the good Sardar interrupted him, and graciously, observed that I was like a grandson to him which was a fact. Since then whenever the Sardar met me on the road, he offered me a lift in his phaeton which naturally I refused for I was invariably accompanied by one or two companions of my age during my walks. But I agreed to visit him occasionally to pay my 'respects' to him. On one such visit I was asked to come and serve in a *Yajna*, feast to a regular host of Sadhus, which I gladly did. The duty of paring potatoes was assigned to me. When a Brahman saw me engaged in this work he raised the cry that the *Yajna* was polluted. This attracted a regular crowd to the spot and imprecations began to be showered on me. Luckily for me, however, my patron, the Sardar, was there supervising the arrangements. He came to my rescue. He strongly reprimanded my traducers and observed that I had done nothing very particularly wrong. What is more he was good enough to say that I was a good boy of strong religious views. My detractors dispersed and thus all untouchability from within me vanished. What a wonderful change has taken place in people's outlook since then. I am writing all this in the year of grace, 1933. Dining in European hotels has become a fashion with Hindu and Sikh notables, even with women-folk. Some of them have been actually seen gleefully partaking of beef-steaks and beef tea.

## CHAPTER XXII

## SCHISM IN BRAHMO SAMAJ

Mr. Perkins was helpful to me in another way. My training and associations in Lahore had made me lean towards the Brahmo Samaj. In fact most educated Hindus of those days were, more or less, inclined towards the Brahmo Samaj and fought shy of the Arya Samaj which they looked upon as a reactionary movement. I was a favourite pupil of the Drawing Master, Pandit Shivi Narain Agnihotri, one of the leading lights of the Lahore Brahmo Samaj. It was a privilege, nay, a joy to us, to attend his lectures in the Lahore Brahmo Mandir. When he rose to speak, the hall of the Mandir resounded with deafening cheers. I was with him when Major Tucker of the Salvation Army, who had recently thrown *up* his high position in the Imperial Civil Service; and had taken up the cross, was delivering his message to a huge gathering in Rang Mahal, Lahore. I noticed how enthusiastically the reverend Pandit was imbibing each and every word of the message, and I was not surprised when he, too, immediately resolved upon throwing up his job in the Municipal Board School to devote himself to the service of God. The whole of educated Lahore gathered in the Brahmo Mandir to witness Pandit's anointment as a Brahmo Missionary. He was named Satyanand Agnihotri. Babu Nabini Chandra Roy, who presided over the ceremony, seemed to look upon the incident as a turning point in the history of the Brahmo Samaj and there were many who shared with him this belief. But Pandit Agnihotri was too strong a man to long remain in the leading strings of anyone. Before a year or so elapsed, he issued a proclamation in his journal that he had been deputed by God as his special messenger to preach a new doctrine. By this time »

change had come upon me. I felt I was more a free-thinker than anything else. And so great was my enthusiasm for my new opinions that I altogether forgot my duty to my erstwhile revered teacher and wrote a signed letter in a Lahore journal animadverting on his claims to prophethood at the fag-end of the nineteenth century. This enraged my old friend Babu Avinash Chandra Mazumdar. He was President of the Rawalpindi Students Association and I its Honorary Secretary. It suggested itself to him that it would be a good hit to me if I was dismissed from this honorary position. I did not mind it for I was away at Lahore. In fact this removal was a gain of Rs. 12/- per annum which I had to pay for the membership of the Association. But my young friends in the Association thought differently. They would not permit the removal of my name. Thereupon Babu Avinash left the meeting in anger and declared the Association to be closed. But sermonizing and lecturing was a hobby with the Babu. He could not do without them. He formed another Association with my friend Deena Nath Bali as Secretary and held its meetings in the premises of the Normal School under the patronage of Babu Nand Singh, Headmaster, who later joined the Judiciary and retired as a Sub-Judge. This was my first fight and I am glad the victory was mine. With the advice of my guardian, Kesho Das, I wrote to my friends to carry on the Association in the premises of the Mission High School as before, despite the tactics of the Babu, and vote a respectable person to the chair when its meetings were held. This they did. At the same time I wrote to Mr. Perkins, who was then in Murree, to come down and preside at the annual gathering of the Association and wire consent. On receipt of the telegraphic message I went to Rawalpindi and borrowed *Shamianas* from Rai Bahadur Sardar Sujan Singh and Rao Sahib Chaudhri Sher Singh and had them erected on the premises of the Mission School. *Qalins* from Yarkand and Kashmere and Kabul and Kandhar served as carpets and ornamental chairs were provided for the dais. The gentry of the town attended in force in response to the invitations issued. The road from the Commissioner's house to the school gate was watered by the Municipal water-brigade.

Perhaps no durbar in my memory presided over even by Lieutenant-Governor was so successfully held as this one. I then read out the annual report dwelling upon the aims and objects of the Association and on the encouragement we had received from all that was good and great in Rawalpindi and incidently mentioned how success had been vouchsafed to us despite the attempts to wreck our work. The Commissioner eulogized our efforts for self-uplift and gave us a handsome donation. Some of the citizens also likewise contributed to our funds which thus amounted to several hundred rupees. This amount we spent in temperance propaganda and on the printing of our report, not in Rawalpindi, Lahore, Delhi or Allahabad, but in Oxford Mission Press, Calcutta. For full three years the Association carried on its work. Avnash Babu's Society, the *Anjuman-i-Rafah-i-Am*, had sung its swan song long before.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### A PADRI'S DEVOTION

A friend who had come in contact with me through my guardian, Kesho Das, somehow, had come to know of my acquaintance with Mr. Perkins. He asked me to request Mr. Perkins to nominate him as an Extra Assistant Commissioner. I wrote as requested. But the request was refused on the ground that my friend did not come from a good stock. He did not know that sons of this friend of mine would wed daughters of high rank like himself and that my friend would live to be one of the most prominent citizens of Punjab's capital.

Later when I was reading in the first year class of the Lahore Government College, I read a placard announcing a lecture from Reverend Mr. Perkins in the Rang Mahal. I at once took him to be the late Commissioner of Rawalpindi and felt an irresistible impulse to go and hear him. There was a fairly large gathering. Dr. Forman, whose name the Lahore Mission College commemorates, introduced the distinguished lecturer and observed in passing that he had been lately occupying the position of Junior Finance Commissioner, Punjab, but he felt the call and had taken up the cross. The learned speaker rose up to explain how he felt the urge to serve his Lord and convey his message to the people of the province he had learnt to respect so much. He had hardly finished his speech and the audience had left for their homes when a young *Padre* approached Dr. Forman and demanded an apology for his having referred to the speaker as one who had sacrificed so much for the sake of serving Lord Jesus, for, said he, that was tantamount to pandering to Mr. Perkins' self-pride. The good old Doctor was preparing to say something in reply when Mr. Perkins

smilingly supported his young critic and said, "Doctor, really you made me feel very awkward by speaking of me as you did." The Doctor expressed his unreserved regret. I and my companions, who had stepped to the dais to hear all this, stood transfixed to the spot in astonishment, bearing in mind how our people were in the habit of making so much fuss over so-called sacrifices by some of our youngmen who for the sake of fame, or direct or indirect gain, put in honorary work in our public institutions or accepted small salaries.

One word more and I shall have done with the Reverend Mr. Perkins. A few months after the aforementioned incident I went to Amritsar to see him in his *Kothi* in the Mission Compound. He called me in and enquired if I had come to him to hear the gospel of Jesus, and when I replied in the negative, he rose up just to make me understand that I should retire. Thus he behaved as if he had never seen or known me.

I was a boy then and felt somewhat offended, but it did not take me long to fully appreciate and admire this detachment from men and things worldly and this wonderful consecration to duty.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### FIRST SHUDHI AT LAHORE

How backward the so-called reformers of my school days were may be judged from the incident I am about to relate. A Hindu youngman, Lala Harvas Rai, M.A., Munsiff, belonging to Bannu district, had turned a Muhammadan. It was sought, or rather he himself wanted, that he should be brought back into the Hindu fold. Till then there was no such thing as re-conversion of such men. Once lost to Hinduism, one was lost for all time. For slight breach of socio-religious conventions, unbearable penalties were imposed, such as long fasts and bathing in the Ganges, which were then attended with awful risks. It occurred to some of College (Government College, Lahore) boarders—the Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College and the Forman Christian College schemes being then in the embryonic stages—that Lala Harvas Rai should be taken back without any formal purification. There was great commotion over this matter. Strange to say that the Hindustani\* boarders, who were believed to be very conservative in such matters, strongly favoured the idea. The Punjabi Hindu boys simply acquiesced in the matter. Perhaps, I was then reading in the Lahore Municipal Board School, for I remember my guardian, Lala Kesho Das, and my, rather his, friend Lala Ruchi Ram Sahni, both then boarders, took a prominent part in the matter. Subscriptions for a dinner were raised and men of light and lead in the educated Hindu gentry

\*The word '-Hindustani' is used here for students belonging to the United Provinces of Agra and Awadh (now Uttar Pradesh), called *Hindustan* in the Punjab.



of Lahore were invited. The dinner was a success. Unfortunately, however, it suggested itself to some ill-disposed Punjabi boarders to kick up a row over this affair. Hot words were exchanged and a social boycott of those who had participated in the dinner was declared. For days Punjabi kitchens remained closed. In this agitation the boys who took the conservative side were mostly of Arya Samajist persuasion. The majority, being of liberal views, carried the day, particularly because they had the active sympathy of the College Staff, including the Principal, Dr. Sime, who had to spend hours in assuaging conservative feeling.

## CHAPTER XXV

### MY COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

When I entered the portals of the College, I thought I would emerge from it wonderfully equipped both in body and mind but no sooner did I see its inward working than my whole soul within me rebelled against the tyrannical control of the University and the College authorities in the choice of subjects to be learnt. And even at this long distance of time I cannot find words to give adequate expression to the absolute cussedness and fatuity which had led to the conception and adoption of one uniform scheme of studies for youngsters of different tastes and intellectual developments. I had to learn Arithmetic, Algebra, Euclid, Trigonometry, Conic sections, Logic, Economics, English, Persian, History, and Physics and Chemistry. Full forty seven years have passed since then. And I can say that I have not benefited in the least from my study of the aforesaid subjects, with the exception of English and history, which I could have as well learnt privately with self-effort. No thought was given to suit education to the requirements of the *alumni*. Even now there are no signs of radical reform in the matter of University curriculum. Every year the University machinery turns out hundreds of graduates who, on leaving the portals of their *Alma Mater*, have to grope their way into various walks of life without requisite equipment for the goals of their ambitions. It seems to be nobody's concern to provide these future hopes of the country with the wherewithals of life to enable them to contribute their share in the uplift of the land that has given them birth. To the European senators, the University Regulations are like the Laws of Moses which it would be profane to alter. As for the Indian senators, these good people, with a few honourable exceptions, are

mostly *Jo Hukam Hazurs* (whatever the *Sahib* wills). They lack originality of conception and initiative and they serve as mere pawns in the game. But if I failed to profit by the educational facilities provided by the Government College, my success in other ways more than counter-balanced this loss. Though a junior student, opportunities presented themselves to enable me to earn a sort of fame which has since stood me in good stead throughout my life. One of these was my appointment as a second speaker at a meeting of our club. The subject on which I was required to write a paper was the "Poverty of India economically considered." I was then in the first year class and had only recently joined it late in the season and had read only a few pages of the text-book on the subject by one Mr. Jevans. The first speaker, I was pitched against, was Shaikh Rahim Bux of the M.A. class. The whole thing seemed to be absurd on the face of it and there was nothing that I did not do to get my name omitted from the list of speakers\* I even yielded to the demand of the Musalman Secretary for a basketful of sweets from the college confectioner costing me full five rupees which he and his comrades strolling in the Collegia verandah joyfully enjoyed, but the dear fellow failed to redeem his promise and, to my dismay, I read my name on the College Notice Board only a day previous to the date of the meeting. I was greatly indignant at the trick played. But I was helpless. Forthwith I borrowed Stuart Mill's work on Economy, then an M.A. text, and set to poring over its pages till late in the night. It was winter-season then, when my dearly beloved friend, Khushi Ram, afterwards Rai Sahib Khushi Ram, M.A., noticing why I had not put off the light in my room till such a late hour, came anxiously to enquire the cause, and, on learning what it was, impressed upon me the futility of my effort and suggested that the best thing that I should do was to jot down my own ideas, whatever they were, and that he was sure they would be well appreciated. Early at dawn I wrote a few pages and hesitatingly placed them in my pocket. The paper was duly read. None among the audience gave any sign showing that he understood what I said. To my great surprise, however, the chairman, Mr. William Bell, Professor

of Philosophy, was lavish in his praise of me. He had not a word to say for the Vth year student, Mr. Rahim Baksh. Every one then saw there was some originality in me and some of them thereafter were markedly kind to me.

Another incident in the College drew men's attention towards me. I have already said that I was more a truant than anything else. I neglected college studies and only lived on the excitement afforded by public reading rooms and public meetings. It was only when I read a notice that students failing in the final House Examination would be refused promotion to the second year class, that I thought of my College books and eagerly set myself to study with the result that I successfully got through all subjects except English in which I believed I could not fail. The only preparation for this subject was my cursory perusal of a note-book of a class-fellow containing a brief resume of Walter Scott's *Kenilworth*. Fortunately one of the questions carrying the largest marks, pass-minimum, was on this very topic. Any other question I was unable to answer; but this one I did splendidly well, for somehow I had acquired a facile pen for writing English ever since my early boyhood. The examiner was Mr. Haden Cope, M.A., Inspector of Schools, Lahore Circle. He, a good man, awarded a big zero for my performance with the remark 'Evidently not original.' This doomed my fate. As I was preparing to leave the room, a class-mate, sitting beside me, who had read the examiner's remark with indignation and who knew me and believed it was unjustified, pushed me back, wrested the answer book from me and showed it to the Professor, Mr. Odgers, who sent for me and desired me to see Mr. Cope who happened to be in the Principal's room at that time and tell him that the composition was my own. I met the gentleman downstairs in the gallery. He glanced over his writing, turned his back on me with the remark that it was some Bengali Babu's performance and cleared off. My professor thereupon went straight to the Principal, Mr. T.C. Lewis, M.A., and got the necessary Permission for my promotion. The incident raised some curiosity among the students and professors who eagerly read my performance and thereafter showed me marked consideration in their attitude

towards me.

Another little incident in the College is deserving of mention. Once my friend, Narinjan Singh Chhachhi of the well known family of the Sikh Jagirdars of Wazirabad, along with some other students, was asked to serve as volunteer on the occasion of a meeting in the College Hall when the well known Sir Sayyad Ahmad Khan, founder of the Aligarh Muslim College, had to lecture. My duty; was at the gate, but when the lecture commenced and no new visitors were observable I was tempted to leave my post and seat myself near the dais with a view to be near the distinguished visitor and hear all that he had to say. The big College Hall was full. The whole audience heard him with rapt attention. Unluckily for me, however, when the illustrious speaker observed that the Hindus were his right eye and when the Hall resounded with loud cheers, I prepared to leave the meeting when a Musalman student rudely pulled me down and prevented my progress.

After the meeting was over he took me to our beloved professor Mr. Golak Nath Chatterji and complained of my conduct. When called upon to explain I simply said : "Sir, I wanted to leave the meeting, for I could not follow the eminent speaker. Really I failed to understand what poor Musalmans had done to be denied even the satisfaction of being called the "left eye of the great Sayyad Sahib." The affair ended with cheers from the students. Mr. Golak Nath, God bless him, simply smiled and the students dispersed to their homes. I knew that Hindu princes and nobles had contributed lacs of rupees to Sir Sayyad's institution.\* I also knew that the majority of the Muslims of the United Provinces those days did not favour Sir Sayyad's idea of imparting English education to their community. Some of these benighted people called him an infidel for his advanced ideas. But with all this the words jarred on my ears, as they do even now particularly when the great Sir Sayyad's pet institute at Aligarh

\* The Muhammadan Anglo-Oriental College, Aligarh, now the Aligarh Muslim University.

has been, for a long time, the nursery, or rather the chief hot-bed, for most of the moves against Hindus, nay against all that is non-Islamic. But wonder of wonders ! Aligarh now has shed its parochialism, thanks to the wave of enlightenment which is widening the outlook of all Indian communities. I am referring to the political horizon of the year of grace 1938.

There are some other incidents of my life in the Government College, Lahore. The staff of the Government College consisted of men who have left a name for all time. There was Maulana Muhammad Husain *Azad*\* a distinguished man of letters and of wide sympathies. Mr. William Bell, M.A., who later, as Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, so liberally patronized educational endeavour in the Province, lectured on English and Philosophy. Mr. Shashi Bhushan Mukerji was Mathematics Professor of great talents. But he was or felt himself so heavy that he never left his chair. Like the mountain of Moses he never moved. Once alone with the temerity of Moses I approached him and, lo ! my difficulty was solved in a minute. His mind was so lucid. The English teacher, Mr. Eric Robertson, M.A., was pure like an angel. He taught us a poetry book, but very few boys followed him, though they all said "Yes" in reply to the question, "Do you follow me ?" Only Shafi, afterwards Sir Mohammad Shafi, who rose to the position of Education Member to the Government of India, Raizada Bhagat Ram, later a distinguished member of the Jullundur Bar, and myself pestered him with questions. It was by a mere accident that he

\* Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad, son of Maulana Muhammad Baqir (son of Maulana Muhammad Akbar of Delhi), was born at Delhi in, 1827; received early education at his grandfather's *madarisa*, and then joined the Delhi College; left home after his father's arrest during the Mutiny, spent some time at Jind, became a *Katib* in the Majma-ul-Bahrain Press of Maulavi Rajab Ali; entered Postal service as a clerk in the P. M. G.'s Office, Lahore, on Rs. 14/- p.m. in 1860; became sub-editor of the *Ataliq-i-Panjab* started by the Punjab Education Department with Master Pyarelal as its editor, 1861; went to Central Asia with a political mission to 1865; was appointed Professor of Arabic at the Government College, Lahore, 1870; went to Persia 1885; received the title of *Shammas-ul-Ulama*, 1887; wrote several books; died 22 January, 1910.

came to know long afterwards how little he was understood. Little wonder, therefore, that I made it a rule to absent myself from his class. After the roll call was over, I slipped out of the class room and rummaged the College library for something more entertaining,, but my mind being flighty I do not think I was better equipped-when I left the College than I was when I joined it except, of course,\* in my good luck in being the recipient of a leaving certificate testifying to my "being regular in attendance and possessing good knowledge of English", bearing the signature of the Principal of the College. This *Giddar Parwana* (a jackal's chit) proved of no small avail later, for with it in my possession I, only an F.A. plucked man, was able to get work, first in several private educational institutions and afterwards in Government service.

Mr. Golak Nath Chatterji, B.A. (Cantab.), was greatly respected for his versatile genius, his joviality of temper, his large-heartedness and for his burning zeal and patriotism. He died young, deeply lamented by all who knew him.

Mr. T.C. Lewis, the boss of the institution, though a typical! Western beaurocrat, was a stern disciplinarian and thoroughly just and impartial and markedly sympathetic towards the *alumni* of his" institution. Once he presided over a meeting of the College union. A proposal was made that the *Pioneer* of Allahabad and the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore, should be subscribed for the College Union Reading Room. I was then a first year student and had only recently joined. I opposed the proposal on the ground that both the journals were anti-Indian in their outlook. My classmate, Prithmi Chand of Bhera, was the only man who seconded me. A boorish Pathan from Bannu with a hang-dog appearance and murderous-looking eyes, and who later served as an Extra Assistant Commissioner, in the Frontier, stood up to oppose me. There were a few other voices censuring me or rather abusing me for the attitude I had taken up. But the Principal, thanks to his British instinct, treated me kindly. He only invited my attention to the fact that the *Tribune* newspaper, which I wanted to be purchased, was a Bengali journal, but on receiving the retort that the proprietor of the *Tribune* was a Punjabi, and it was

immaterial who edited it, he postponed the consideration of the proposal to the next meeting, but never in his dealings with me he showed any resentment. The next meeting of the Union was presided over by Mr. Golak Nath Chatterji. My amendment was passed by a large majority, only dissentient voices being half a dozen Muhammadan students, headed by the afore-said border man, whom I had punished for his opposition of me at the previous meeting by my success in having his request for the purchase of the *Aligarh Gazette*, a notorious anti-Hindu journal, disallowed on the simple ground that it was iniquitous to purchase such a journal out of the money mostly contributed by Hindu students. There were, perhaps, not more than a dozen Musalman students in the College. Sikhs were still fewer.

Mr. Lewis had another occasion to show what an ideal Principal he was. When Lord Rippon, the Governor-General, visited Lahore shortly before his retirement, the whole of Indian Lahore accorded him a hearty welcome. The boarders of the Government College also did not want to remain behind their countrymen in according to His Excellency a most hearty welcome. The trees on both sides of the Lower Mall, from the College to the Chief Court building, now the Punjab Civil Secretariat, were decorated with buntings. It may be noted here that the local British officers were not well-disposed towards Lord Rippon. To please them, a Musalman Tehsil official, who was trotting about in the Gol Bagh, saw me, then perhaps a visitor to Lahore, and another first year student seated on a bench in front of Jamsetji's shop, on which spot now stands the New Hostel of the Government College, passing on the flags to friends perched higher up on the trees. He accosted us and rudely enquired what we were doing. On being told that if he had eyes he could clearly see what we were doing he ordered his peon to assault us. Down jumped the students from above the trees and gave the minion and his boss a good licking, an adventure in which the passers-by, also, gleefully joined. I was told that an explanation was called for from Mr. Lewis and that on being, informed of the real facts he wrote back saying that he was proud of his students and that he would have behaved likewise under similar circumstances.

## CHAPTER XXVI

## A GLIMPSE OF JOY

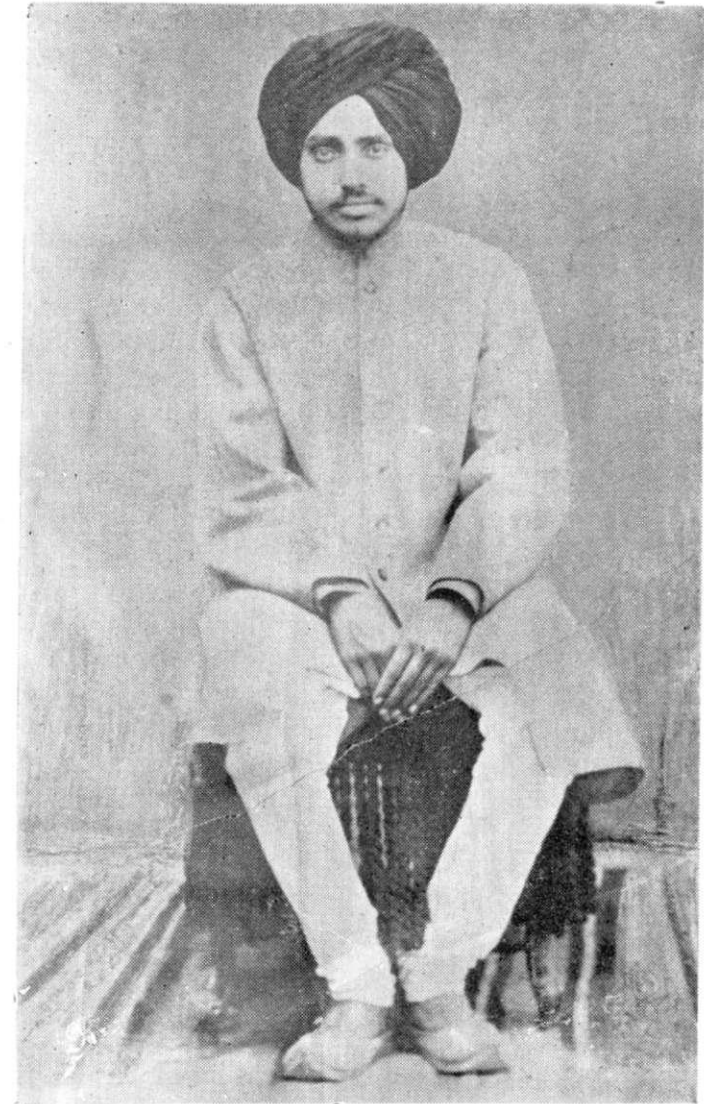
Having failed in the Intermediate Examination, I had to fall back upon my permanent apprenticeship in the District Kutchery Rawalpindi. My father was the oldest employee there and, I being his son, no one dared question my right to go to the Deputy Commissioner's office and leave it at will. Time rolled on and any number of vacancies occurred; but my name was passed over, perhaps, because my father either could not afford or did not care to give *Dali* to the Deputy Commissioner's reader. Previous to this his own roll for Naib Tehsildarship had been sent up along with that of another man, but he had lost his chance somehow. Notwithstanding I continued attending office, though I never put in any work there; for my handwriting was so very bad that I myself shrank at the very sight of it. At any rate I was loth to spoil the beautiful paper supplied to Government offices those days. Mr. Judd, Head Clerk, and his successor, Mr. Evans, both were indulgent to me, despite my failings. I was dubbed a *Lai Sahib*, meaning worthless or careless chap, and was left to my fate. But after the lapse of several months an opportunity presented itself which brought me to the notice of the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Gardiner, a man of talents and with the heart and character of a devout *Padre*. He was appointed by the Government to revise the well known book, the *Punjab Chiefs*. In this connection he received letters in Vernacular from men who wanted additional information about the loyal services of their forbears to be inserted in the revised edition of the book. These communications he sent to the office to be rendered into English. Once the man who was entrusted with

this work asked me to do this duty for him which I gladly did. There was something in my translation which attracted Mr. Gardiner. I was sent for and was given some work to do. And before days elapsed he sent me to Attock to officiate as a Nazir in the Court of the Assistant Commissioner there. This was truly a glimpse of joy. After all I was going to earn my living, small though it was. The emoluments of the post were Rs. 20/- per mensem. In my case Rs. 5/- were sanctioned as an allowance for acting as English interpreter to the Pathan Magistrate, a bully with blood-red eyes and ferocious looks, who was a bugbear to his own people, but who, on the mere sight of a European, underwent a sudden change and was all urbanity and suavity. My three months' stay with him was, indeed, a trial. He was a convicting Magistrate and he seemed to enjoy this reputation.

Once he ordered that a Musalman judgment-debtor should be kept in custody till he paid off rupees seven hundred decreed against him. This man happened to be an old Munshi of Rawalpindi Tehsil who used to present me with bouquets when as a child I visited the Tahsil office on some errand from my people. When he was brought into my room, I at once recognized him and respectfully seated him in my room. After office time I visited several big people, Hindus and Musalmans, both in the Attock town and Malahitola, a mile or so further off, under the belief that somebody might advance him a temporary loan, even on my security. I thought that I was somebody, for had not these men seen me in the office and met me on the roads and blandly salaamed me? But not one came to my aid. I went to the Naib Tehsildar and the Tehsildar, whom I also knew and enquired if they could help. The reply was in the negative. Acting under their advice I, then, sent the debtor to the judicial lock-up late in the night. But before doing so I sent a messenger to the man's village who returned with the requisite money early at dawn. On the receipt of the money, I sent away the debtor and with my boyish exuberance informed the Magistrate how I had been instrumental in enabling the debtor to make prompt payment of the amount due from him and had let him off. I expected a smile or a word or two of approbation, but

instead I was administered a rebuke. The dear man thought I had arrogated to myself the dignity of the Sub-Divisional Officer by letting off the judgment-debtor myself. The procedure was for such persons to be presented to the court which then solemnly pronounced the orders for release. This departure from the usual roundabout procedure could have been easily excused. But the good Magistrate thought otherwise. He hauled me up as if I had done a heinous crime, wrote down a long indictment, kept me standing for several hours and finally allowed me to return to my place after receiving a written explanation from me. I simply said that I was not aware of the rules and that I would not be again guilty of wounding the pride of my boss. The Deputy Commissioner returned the papers with the brief remark that he believed I would do no such thing again. This served as a quietus and I was not molested thereafter in any way.

But I felt an urge within me to make it a bit hot for my boss. An opportunity soon presented itself. A young British officer from the fort who was riding a beautiful horse came up to me and desired me to report his arrival to the Magistrate. It was late in the afternoon. The Magistrate had retired to his *harem* (family quarters). I, too, had shut the office almirah and was ready to go home. I did not, therefore, feel called upon to do the visitor's errand. But when he said that the matter was urgent and that he had come to ask the Magistrate to supply him with women for his men, my blood boiled within me. That very morning I had read in the papers that the British Parliament had allowed a couple of ladies to visit India and enquire and report to what extent the Government was responsible for this vice. Naturally, therefore, I could not help remarking to the officer that I did not believe the Magistrate, a staunch Muslim, would entertain such an indecent proposal. The officer took my retort as an insult, particularly when the Magistrate on hearing our altercation came out and smiled on seeing the Sahib thereby conveying the impression that he was really of my way of thinking. That was the last day of my officiating term. Afterwards I learnt that the Magistrate was transferred. Some bird had breathed into my ears that the Commissioner had



BHAGAT LAKSHMAN SINGH  
as a youngman

## A GLIMPSE OF JOY

received unsatisfactory reports of the Magistrate's work. Mr. Gardiner had in the meantime been appointed Divisional Judge. The new Deputy Commissioner had no cause to know me or care for me. The experience of my last appointment was so very sad that I never, thereafter, thought of seeking employment in the district kutchery or any subordinate court.

I think I shall be guilty of ingratitude if I do not state here how my associations and training under American Christian missionaries stood me in good stead. Before I proceeded to Attock to officiate as a *Nazir*, I strengthened myself with a letter from a cousin of mine to Rai Sahib Gopal Das, Sub-Divisional Officer, who was an old friend of my family, and under whom I had to work. Though well read in Persian, I knew it would be difficult to decipher *shikasta* handwriting over which the Urdu writers of those days prided so much. I requested my officer to kindly let me have the assistance of some who should introduce me to my new work. He very kindly directed his reader, Munshi Narain Singh of Kallar, to see that necessary help was vouchsafed to me. In his turn Munshi Narain Singh instructed a Vernacular Middle passed Hindu *pyada*, whose duty was to serve court summonses, but who was actually working as *Muharar*, to render me all possible assistance. This help the youngman joyfully undertook to do. He was indeed all kindness, so much so that he would not permit me even to touch office books, assuring me all the while that my term being temporary it was not necessary for me to bother. In a day, however, it became clear to me that the dear fellow's tips amounted to something like seven rupees. The process was most cruel. It was not simple fleecing innocent litigants, it was day-light robbery, pure and simple. On the second day of my taking over charge, my friend's wife died. I thought this calamity would have a chastening effect on him. But it did not. On the very following morning he went through the same farce. A Musalman peasant had to get something done for him. He was asked to give rupees two for the service. The man had only one rupee with him. He was shown eyes and rebuked. To my utter dismay, the poor fellow was made to part with the only new *chader* or *khaddar* he had on his person.

## A GLIMPSE OF JOY

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I was all a silent spectator of this drama, which was being played before my very eyes. Of course, the Sub-Divisional Officer knew nothing of this roguery. Before I could gather courage to draw his attention towards this rotten state of affairs, he was transferred. I contented myself with simply doing my work myself disregarding of the errors I might make in carrying on my duties much to the discomfiture of my afore-said office assistant. The deprivation of all his chances for illegal gratification was sufficient punishment to him. Somehow the report spread in the court *amlah* and not much time passed before I had strong friends to help me. They would leave their own work and see that there was no accumulation of arrears. Oh, how thankful was I for all this ! What a relief ! What a joy to be looked upon with a kindly eye not only by poor litigants who sought my help, but even by those who were better placed and did not need my assistance.

I might also observe in passing that my slight acquaintance with Mr. Gardiner proved of not little help to me in another way. Perhaps half a dozen times he sent me Urdu manuscripts for being rendered into English for his work in D.O. service envelopes. They excited curiosity which no explanation from me could satisfy.

The good people who noticed the arrival of these letters on consecutive days thought I was being pressed to receive Christian baptism, for the belief was common that Mr. Gardiner had a soft corner in his heart for his Christian acquaintances. Need I say that this wrong impression worked as a *talisman* and protected me from all malevolent influences for months together.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### AN EFFORT THAT FAILED

What was I to do now ? My father had other sons and daughters to support and educate. He could not go on feeding me for all time. He was, further, only a day labourer. He only owned the house we lived in and had no money in any bank.

Some distant relatives on the mother's side offered to undertake my expenses if I qualified myself for the legal profession which I could easily do, but I had no liking for it. Neither did I accept a suggestion to join the Medical College for qualifying as an Assistant Surgeon, for the very smell of the College Dissection-room, which I had once visited, had made me feel sick. What was I to do then ? Once when I was musing over my fate, my friend Mr. Hem Chandra Mukerji, Vakil, Rawalpindi, a very conscientious Christian gentleman, whom I had known from my boyhood on account of his close friendship with my Headmaster, Babu Parvati Chandra Bannerji, suggested that I should take to journalism, for which, he said, I had a particular aptitude. He knew Mr. Rallia Ram, Vakil of Amritsar, who was known to have great influence over Sardar Dyal Singh Majithia, proprietor of the *Tribune*, Lahore, and gave me a letter of recommendation to him. I saw Mr. Rallia Ram, a tall, handsome old man, who expressed great pleasure at meeting me and told me that he would be delighted to interest himself on my behalf. I took his recommendation and went to Lahore with a view to seeing Sardar Sahib next morning. But when in the evening I met my friend, the late *Rai Bahadur* Kunj Bihari Thapar, he dissuaded me from accepting Mr. Mukerji's suggestion. My fate, he said, would be

simply precarious. He himself had been on the staff of the *Tribune* for a number of years and had found the position as simply intolerable. Before him, Lala Dwarka Das, M.A., had the same experience. Sardar Dyal Singh, said he, was undoubtedly a gem, but the Bengali influence over him would never go in favour of any Punjabi journalist. This was enough to shatter all my hopes of successfully working on the editorial staff of the *Tribune*. The safer course for me, he thought, was to join the local Training College and qualify myself as a schoolmaster. He knew Lala Umrao Singh, M.A., officiating Principal of the College, and to him he gave me a letter of introduction.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### AT THE TRAINING COLLEGE

Mr. Kunj Bihari's letter secured me admission into the Senior Anglo-Vernacular class of the College and also a stipend of Rs. 12/- per mensem. This was as good as manna from the sky. I felt overjoyed. But very soon the stiffness of the staff, mostly Hindustani *Banias*, acted as a cold douche on my enthusiastic nature. All of them were Masters of Arts, but their education and culture had neither broadened their outlook nor expanded their hearts. They were all cold and formal. Only a few days after my joining the College, I was asked to go to the black-board and work a proposition of Euclid. My handwriting, as already stated, was certainly inelegant, but not so my mental equipment. The Mathematics Master wondered how on earth a person with such a bad handwriting dared entertain the hope of succeeding as a teacher. I quietly pocketed the insult. But not many days elapsed before he had to change his opinion of me. The Principal, Mr. Cope, presided over a meeting of the College Literary Club. The subject was the indebtedness of the Musalman Zamindars. My class-fellow, Khurshid Ahmad of Gujranwala, dwelt on the rapacity of the Hindu money-lender and claimed that it was the Hindu *Sahukar* who was responsible for the sad plight of the Musalman agriculturists and the whole Musalman community generally. The other side controverted this view. In support of this view I stood up to say emphatically that from my own personal knowledge I could say a lot showing how fallacious Khurshid's reasoning was. The Musalman was poverty-stricken for he was not thrifty and was sadly lacking in foresight. He could keep four wives at a time. The Hindus did not recognize this multiplicity of marriages and so

did Christians. Their inborn thrift practically made them believers in monogamy. A couple of years or so previous I had replaced an elderly Maulavi as Headmaster of a Municipal Board Middle School, when it had been raised to the status of an Anglo-Vernacular Middle School, and who had guided the destinies of the institution for about two decades. Taking pity on him, I got him an increment of five rupees per mensem. But only a month after the receipt of the first increment, he contracted matrimonial ties with a young damsel and coloured his beard to look young. This was not a solitary instance. The evil had been ingrained in a Musalman by his surroundings and time-honoured customs. I went on talking warmly in this strain. My class-fellows, mostly Hindus, cheered me. The teaching staff, mostly Hindus, seemed to enjoy my peroration. The Chairman, Mr. Cope, who was pro-Muhammadan, called me to order, upon which I took my seat. The professor to whom my scribbling on the black-board was so offensive now began to see all beauty in me. Even the Principal, Mr. Cope, seemed to feel a particular liking for me, which grew into a sort of attachment, as he knew me more and more. This stood me in good stead, later, when he had to pass orders on the report for my expulsion from the College. I shall presently relate how this happened. There was a Pathan class-fellow of mine, a handsome stout fellow, native of a village Jungle by name, a mile from Kohat city. He appeared to belong to a respectable family, but quite against its traditions and culture, he adopted boorish manners towards his class-fellows, particularly towards an intelligent youngman from Delhi. I could not stand this, but instead of openly asking him in a straightforward manner to correct his behaviour, I adopted a crooked way, quite unusual with me, to bring him to his senses. The matting on the floor of our class-room was made of Kohati straw, very tough and prickly. I would take out a straw and prick my Pathan friend's ears from my seat on the back bench. The poor man started with pain and looked round to see who it was that had taken so much liberty with him. But I sat calm and sedate like a statue of Buddha. This went on for days. Once unfortunately a straw or two protruded from my coat-pocket. My victim saw it and brought

the matter to the notice of the Vice-Principal, Lala Umrao Singh, M.A., who taunted me with all sorts of things and ultimately reported the case to the Principal for orders. I was asked to explain my conduct. But what explanation could I offer? I had been caught red-handed, and that, too, in the presence of the Vice-Principal himself, which was a sacrilegious act so to say. The punishment proposed was a heavy fine or the forfeiture of my stipend. In either case I would have had to leave the College. In dismay I hung my head just to indicate that I acknowledged my misbehaviour. But Mr. Cope wanted a straightforward explanation. And he had it. I confessed my guilt and said in justification of my act that I had acted as I did, simply because I felt a sort of pleasure in molesting a bully. The Principal, hard and stern, though he was, could not suppress a smile and he ordered me away. A drastic step suggested by the Indian Vice-Principal would have been tantamount to my being cast away as it were. The beauty of the whole thing is that this very Vice-Principal had a couple of months previous prevailed upon me to contribute three successive letters to the *Tribune* against the policy of the Department those days which was responsible for the appointment of a European Superintendent of the College whenever the Principal went on leave and an Indian was appointed to officiate. I had made it a rule never to write to the press anonymously or under a pseudonym. These letters I got signed by a class-fellow of mine, who always carried my behests as if with eyes folded. The letters created a sensation. My secret, however, oozed out. A class-fellow of mine, a Kashmiri Pandit, had somehow come to know of it. I took the whole responsibility on me and shielded both my amanuensis and my teacher. The loss to me was great. I forfeited the sympathy of the officer against whose appointment over and above the head of the Indian officiating Principal, I had started an agitation in the *Tribune*. He was examiner in the Principles of Teaching. I failed in this subject to my own astonishment and that of my teachers and class-fellows, whose partiality for me had led them to think that I could write as good a book as the one that had been prescribed as the college text, viz., Currie's *Principles and Art of*

**Teaching.** Whether the principles enunciated in this book were worth much I cannot say, but of this I was certain that there was more of art in the College bricks than in this book or the men that had to teach it. I never marvelled then, nor for years afterwards as head of educational institutions or as Inspector of Schools, that the alumni of the Training College should have honoured these' principles more in the breach thereof than in their observance. Next year I reappeared in this examination privately under a changed name, but this time also the same European officer was entrusted with the work of examining candidates in the practice *op* teaching. He recognized me. My lesson was 'The Teaching of Budha.' A thesis from me on this subject would have obtained me the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, but my own Professor, for *flj* had been a pupil of his in the Government College, assigned me 8 marks for each and every' sub-head of the lesson. When the result was published it was shown to the Director, Doctor Sime. He refused to believe that any British Officer could knowingly do a wrong. But he was good enough to issue an official letter allowing my appointment in Board Schools without the usual teaching certificate.. But I needed no such thing. Schoolmasterships came unasked. I worked as Headmaster of Anglo-Vernacular Municipal Board schools in my own and in the neighbouring district of Hazara. But there was so much interference in internal management that it was not long before I g?ve up my job in disgust and accepted the editorship of the *Punjab Times*, an English weekly of my, own town.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### AGITATION AGAINST THE LOCATION OF THE KHALSA COLLEGE

It was about this time, 1888-89 A.D., that I met Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla, then a petty Railway Accounts Inspector, whose public spirit had enabled his younger brother, Lala Hans Raj, to act as Honorary Principal of the Lahore Dayananda Anglo-Vedic College and who has won name and fame both for himself and his brother and wealth also, for he 'now occupies an eminent position as director of several banks. I had seen him once before, during early eighties in his *baithak* in Mochi Gate, Lahore, if I remember aright, in some connection. But it was at this time that I came to acquire a sort of familiarity with him and even felt some regard for him, partly because he happened to be a close friend of my cousin, the late Rai Bahadur Bhagat Narain Das, M.A., and my distant kinsman, the late Doctor Jai Singh, who, later, came into prominence as pioneer of the Shudhi Movement, and chiefly because his brochure in Urdu, *Shahid Ganj*, dealing with the martyrdom of the four sons of Guru Gobind Singh and of Haqiqat Rai, had filled me with the belief that the Lala's heart really pulsated with love for all that was good and great in our history. It was under this belief that I listened to his advice in burning in a furnace five hundred copies of a pamphlet,\* comprising some of my letters

\* A copy of the pamphlet was luckily found by a friend in a library in Karachi and during the summer of the year 1936 A.D. I contemplate bringing out its new edition with a prefatory note —B.L.S.

The friend referred to above is Prof. Hukam Chand Kumar. For Paucity of funds, the pamphlet could not be printed in 1936. — G.

on the Arya Samaj which had been collected and edited by Reverend Henry Martyn Clark of the Church Mission Society, Amritsar. Five hundred copies of the booklet had been kept by the editor with himself. What became of these copies and whether the editor is now in the land of the living, and where he is now, I do not know. But I now feel that the booklet would have thrown a flood of light on the history of the Arya Samaj movement pertaining to that period and on the extravagant claim, on its behalf as the pioneer body in the matter of social and religious reform. Though not a Sikh at that time, I believed that the work of the holy Sikh Gurus had completely changed the outlook of the Punjab Hindus and that the preaching of any new gospel in the home of Sikhism was simply carrying coal to New Castle.

In this connection I wrote two letters to Miss Manning's journal, *the Indian Magazine*, London. \*One of these letters forms an appendix to this work; the other has been mislaid. But at that time I was led to think under the mesmeric influence of Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla that my behaving as a Hun in burning my own book, containing my heart-pourings on the socio-religious conditions of Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab during the previous two decades, I was really doing an act of merit. It never occurred to me that Lala Mulk Raj, though not a registered member of any Arya Samaj then, was elder brother of Lala Hans Raj, who, as Principal of the D.A.-V. College in the capital of the province, was destined to serve as a pivot around whom the Arya Samaj movement was thenceforward to move, might have had some hidden motive in advising as he did.

It was the same sinister influence that led Doctor Jai Singh and my cousin Rai Bahadur Bhagat Narain Das to lend their influence to the agitation, engineered by Lala Mulk Raj against

\* *Indian Magazine*, London, Vol. XX, No. 228, New series 48, for December, 1889. This journal was issued by the Indian National Association in aid of social progress and education in India. The other letter said to have been mislaid was published in the previous May. None of the letters is included in this volume —G.

the location of the proposed Khalsa College in Lahore. It never occurred to them also that they were simply playing as tools in the hands of an adept in a well known art, who regarded the proposal of the establishment of a Sikh College in Lahore under the patronage of all the Sikh States as a menace to the great scheme he had chalked out for his own aggrandisement and of his family and indirectly of his community. The whole plan was beautifully devised and was successfully carried out, and care was taken that it should not transpire who the principal wire-puller was. I shudder whenever I am reminded of the underhand ways and means adopted towards this end, of the gossip and slander, and of the lying propaganda employed to sully the fair name of the promoters of the Khalsa College movement. Men were made to truly believe that these promoters were actually working as spies of the alien Christian government in proposing to locate the College at Lahore, instead of their chief holy city of Amritsar, where their great community would be impervious to all un-Sikh influences. A long memorial to the Government was drawn up, supported by thousands of signatures. Hundreds of telegrams were sent to the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir Robert Egerton.

Under this mesmeric influence, I, too, sent one such telegram. The late Lala Amolak Ram of Gujranwala, was then posted as Munsiff at Rawalpindi. He contributed long articles in support of the agitation to the *Tribune*, Lahore. He persuaded me also to do likewise which I did. Even such an astute person as Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi was approached by Lala Mulk Raj's agents to lend his influence to the agitation. Though an extremely generous-hearted man, he had never forgiven the pioneers of the Singh Sabha Movement, a few of whom had insulted him sometime previous by removing his *gaddi* cushions in the *Parkarma* of the Golden Temple from underneath him to show that the use of a *fnasnad*, a high seat, could not be permitted in the precincts of the holy Darbar Sahib, as the Golden Temple is called by the Sikhs, to any person, however highly placed he might be, and that they did not acknowledge him as Guru of the Sikhs. The Baba readily consented. He saw Sir Robert Egerton, who believed him really to

be a great Sikh Guru, and poisoned his mind against the devoted small batch of the Sikh workers. The Lieutenant-Governor had been appointed by the two rival parties of the Sikhs to arbitrate on the matter—the other party belonging to the city of Amritsar consisted chiefly of the descendants and near relatives of the *Pujaris* of the Golden Temple. These men had no *locus standi*, for they had absolutely no hand in the conception of the scheme and its furtherance and were actively opposed to the Singh Sabha Movement on account of the latter's pronounced *a.n.ti-Pujari* propaganda. Under such a pressure, Sir Robert Egerton, who, does not appear to have been an astute politician, decided in favour of Amritsar. The Sikh workers do not seem to have been, well put up with full facts in regard to the extent of the agitation and its possible consequences or else they could have easily frustrated the efforts of their antagonists with the powerful help of the President of the Khalsa College Establishment Committee, the late Sir William Rattigan, who wielded immense influence with the Government those days. Even Mr. William Bell, the first Secretary of the Establishment Committee, then a Professor in the Government College, would have nipped the agitation in the bud single-handed.

Now, when I have crossed the allotted span of life, three scores and fifteen, and have seen so much of the world, I do not attach much significance to the controversy and cannot say whether the College, if established at Lahore, would have conduced more to the well-being of the Sikh community. For opinions differ as to whether, after all, the crowding together the flower of a community in a big city, with its manifold temptations and the; demoralising influences of a close association with the youngsters of less virile people, wanting in traditions that inspire bravery and chivalry and lend true charm and dignity to manhood, whose craze for gold and pelf and power, by means fair or foul, as the be-all and end-all of their lives, is the *sine-qua-non* of existence, or whether it would have been more profitable for the youngsters of; the Sikh community to be brought up in a city like Amritsar, where the choking atmosphere created by a religious hierarchy

made formidable by centuries of rank superstition engendered by the clever protagonists of spiritual craft, would automatically lead to the atrophying of human mind, for no end of time, and destroy, by subtler means, all human efforts for intellectual liberation and man's innate desire to think and act for himself. But at that time when soon after I saw through the Machiavellian plan of Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla, my blood boiled within me. In rage I gave vent to my pent up feelings in reply to a pamphlet\* from the pen of a writer, who defended the agitation in favour of the location of the College at Amritsar, under the pseudonym, a Pothohari, of whose identity I came to know afterwards and who was not only not a Sikh, but an Arya Samajist fanatic, in fact a *chela* of Lala Mulk Raj Bhalla. But I had then no money for the printing and circulation of my manuscript. Later, when I was a member of the Khalsa College Council, I consulted a few of my colleagues whether it would be worth while to incur expenses on its publication, I was advised to give up the idea for the question of the location of the College at Amritsar was then a *fait accompli*. No man is altogether bad, Lala Mulk Raj is certainly not. He is still alive and kicking. I wonder if in his heart of hearts he is sorry for the dirty game he played.

\* *Amritsar versus Lahore or Controversy about the Location of the Khalsa College* by a Pothohari. Bhagat Lakshman Singh's reply to this pamphlet is preserved in the collection of his papers in the possession of the editor. In reply to a question of the editor on March 25, 1939, Bhagat Lakshman Singh told him that the writer of the pamphlet was Bhagat Narain Das. —G.

## CHAPTER XXX

## A ROLLING STONE

(1890-1894)

For a few months I officiated as Headmaster of the Municipal Board Middle School, Haripur, in the Hazara district, two or three miles off my ancestral village, Serai Saleh. There I learnt from an octogenarian Datta Brahman, the head of my family *Prohits*, the part my saintly great-grandfather from whom the family had borrowed the surname Bhagat, played in the uplift of the *Ilaga*. Though a devout Vaishnav Hindu he had a sincere regard for the Sikh creed, which is evidenced from the fact that he made a gift of a portion of his house to Bhai Chhataki, a Sikh saint of Kot Najibullah, for the erection of a Dharamsala and the installation of *Guru Grant-h Sahhib* therein. But the chief incident of my stay in Haripur is the support that I received from the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Frederic Cunningham of the Black Mountain Expedition fame whose death was announced in 1936. A Muslim assistant teacher, who was in charge of the school games, abused two grown up school boys when playing cricket and was given a thrashing. When the matter was reported to me I sent for the Tehsildar, President of the Municipal Committee, and in his presence the two boys concerned were administered four cuts each. The Mussulman District Inspector of Schools, thought it too lenient a punishment and directed me to report the incident to him. I regarded it as an interference in the internal economy of the school under my charge and refused compliance with the wishes of the District Inspector of Schools. This minion in authority—he was a *Mirasi* (minstrel) by birth—made an

alliance with a Hindu Assistant Inspector. They both plagued me with letters after letters calling on me to report the matter to them. Their idea was to move the Deputy Commissioner, over and above me, and have the punishment enhanced. I brought this matter to the notice of the Inspector, Mr. Thompson, who reviewed the case, let off one of the boys and punished the other, the real assailant, with rustication for one year. This ought to have satisfied any other man. But my bosses were made of a different mould. My senior boss, the Assistant Inspector, was incorrigible. To defeat his vampish appetite I placed an order in the school order-book saying that students and teachers who would visit the Assistant Inspector in the Dak Bungalow on his return from Abbottabad would be severely dealt with. On this matter being made known to the Deputy Commissioner, he telegraphed to the Inspector to relieve me at once, but when, instead of doing so, the Inspector asked me to explain my conduct and when this explanation was forwarded to Mr. Cunningham he sent for me by wire. I had, of course, to comply. But in my heart of hearts I wished avoiding meeting this man, for, from what I had heard of him, I took him to be quite the reverse of Daniel. But I was wrong in my estimate of him. When I entered his room he stood up from his chair and asked me to turn my back on him and relate the story of my differences with my bosses from the beginning to the end. And when I had finished and he was convinced of the truth of my allegations, he offered me a chair and resumed his seat. He said he had made me turn my back on him so that I might freely have my say. The good man was under the impression that, perhaps, the sight of him might have overawed me, and, thus, prevented me from stating full truth. He was further pleased to say that he had sent for me to personally assure me that, in his opinion, though wanting in tact, I had shown strength of character and he was so pleased with me that he would like me made permanent Headmaster in place of the original incumbent who was too old and sick and whom he wished to retire on gratuity. This, quite an unexpected turn in the case, was a delightful surprise. Naturally the decision deeply enhanced

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my respect for British character. I have had to deal with any number of British officers, since then, and particularly the Civilian Officers. I have found them, man to man, except in one or two cases, very superior men indeed.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### DRIVEN FROM PILLAR TO POST

Mr. Cunningham's kind offer I respectfully declined and took up the editorial charge of the *Punjab Times*,<sup>2S</sup> English weekly in Rawalpindi, my home. The proprietor, Mr. Thapar, was an illiterate Hindu gentleman, who had come into possession of a printing concern, established by his deceased brother. All that he cared for was to scrape together silver and gold coins which his advertisements of all sorts, especially of balls and dances in Soldiers' clubs and theatricles, brought him. He had no policy and no talented writer to run the journal. The editing was done by retired European sergeants, who had also to do the job of salesmen at the proprietor's shop. Even such a trash as this journal was had its patrons among the Rawalpindi citizens, chiefly of the lawyer class, who had to pave their way into life by starting some agitation or other. Once a member of this fraternity, who happened to be a city-father, wanted to drag me into the controversy as to whether the President of the Municipal Committee should be an official or a non-official. As I knew most of the members and was well aware of the sense of responsibility they felt, it made no difference to me whether the President was an official or a non-official, even a cousin chimpanzee, if the work assigned was only a share in the loot of public funds. Naturally, I refused to insert in the paper anything that went against my convictions.

At another time a Eurasian assistant master of the local Mission School wanted me to insert something damaging about his

head, a Dane.\* I showed him the way out. This created a scene. The worthy proprietor appeared and stood aghast on noticing my behaviour towards a 'Sahib'. I smiled, salaamed him and slid out. A cheque for three months' salary soon followed me. Truly an enjoyable experience.

But the quest for the wherewithals of existence again made me feel the need for seeking some kind of remunerative work. With this aim I joined the local Superintending Engineer's office as an apprentice. The superintendent, an elderly Bengali gentleman, promised assistance and not many days passed before I was sent to Kohat to officiate as clerk for a couple of months on Rs. 40/- per mensem in the Executive Engineer's office. My stay in Kohat was a joy really. Every morning I enjoyed a bath in its famous springs. And what is more, I took the earliest opportunity to visit the house of Sher Zaman Khan, my class-fellow of the Training College, in his village, at the distance of a mile from Kohat. Rustam Khan, a cousin of his, a fellow-clerk, accompanied me. His father-received me most kindly and served me with fruit and milk. My friend had, the year previous, broken journey at Haripur, on his way to Nathia Galli, where he was serving as a Reader to the Commissioner, Peshawar Division, to see me in my school. He hugged me to his breast with fraternal warmth, thereby showing that he had forgotten the incident of my pricking his ears. He was now Tehsildar of Kurram. On learning of my presence in Kohat he wrote to his people to pay me all possible attention and care at the happy recollection of which my heart still thrills with joy.

From Kohat I went to Kalka on the invitation of Rai Bahadur Daulat Ram, CLE., Superintendent, Simla Mails, to work as Head Clerk of his office on Rs. 70/- per mensem. But this promised windfall slipped from my hands. The trouble arose owing

to my health certificate granted by the Civil Surgeon of Kasauli, which stated that I was 25 years old by appearance, but 26 according to my own statement. I was thus overage and, therefore, debarred from entering Government service. The Rai Bahadur obtained the Post Master General Mr. Sheridan's permission to take me into inferior service, and afterwards promote me to superior service. Thus the age difficulty was removed. I was appointed a bullock-train guard on Rs. 6/- per mensem. A few days after I was promoted to superior service and was appointed Branch Post Master at Koti, 6 miles or so from Kalka, on Rs. 10/- per mensem. After a couple of months I was transferred to Kumar Hatti as Mail Agent on Rs. 20/- per mensem. By this time I forfeited the Rai Bahadur's regard by identifying myself with a subordinate of his whose fidelity he wrongly suspected. As over a year had passed and the prospect of decent emoluments was not in sight, I proceeded on long leave from Ludhiana where I was working as a Money Order clerk and finally resigned my position in the Postal department.

\* This gentleman was Mr. James W. Woutersz, Headmaster of the School. Very cordial relations later on developed between Bhagat Lakshman Singh and Mr. Woutersz and the latter was instrumental in getting him appointed officiating assistant-master tinder himself after his leaving the Postal department, —G.

**CHAPTER XXXII**

**IN THE GORDON MISSION COLLEGE RAWALPINDI**

In return for a good turn that I had been enabled to do him, Mr. James W. Woutersz, a Danish gentleman, who was Headmaster of the Mission Collegiate School, Rawalpindi, got me appointed as an officiating assistant master under him. My stay in this institution from May or June 1894 to October 1898, is one of the happiest chapters of my life. The Manager, Reverend Mr. R. Morrison, M.A., finding me a useful hand, created for me a special vacancy and placed me in charge of the English and History classes in the College department, in addition to a period or two for teaching translation to the High classes. Thus secure in my position and having got work that I liked best, I set myself to the task of seeing that the College department was a success. It had only two classes, 1st and 2nd. In the Second Year class there were 12 scholars, but in the First Year there were only 4. This was a very discouraging feature. The Manager was considering whether the College department should be closed when, by chance, he broached the idea to me. I asked for two weeks' time to consider. I knew what it meant to men of slender means to send their sons for higher education to Lahore and was, therefore, anxious that this boon to the people of my town should not be withdrawn. I studied the whole situation and found that there were many things radically wrong with the institution. It had not been properly advertised. No opening ceremony had been performed and public co-operation had not been invited. The tuition fees charged were those charged by the Lahore Government College. No other minor college in the province charged such high rates. I collected statistics from the

Edward Mission College, Peshawar, the Mission College, Sialkot, Municipal Board College, Amritsar, and the Forman Christian College, Lahore. Armed with the necessary facts and figures and having procured signatures of about forty boys from among my pupils in the two sections of the X High class to join the College if they successfully passed the Matriculation standard, I saw the Manager and placed my views before him. He agreed. The fees were reduced by fifty per cent. The opening ceremony was successfully performed under the presidentship of the Commissioner, Rawalpindi Division, Colonel Montgomery. Diwan Bahadur (now Raja) Narindra Nath, M.A., the District Judge, Rawalpindi, addressed the gathering eulogizing the share of the Christian Missions in the educational uplift of our country and appealed for funds. Sardar Bahadur Sujan Singh, CLE., and several other citizens offered handsome contributions. Some thirty boys joined the next First Year class. All these auspicious beginnings contributed to the success of the College. The enterprising management, later, raised it to the status of Degree College and provided it with a separate building in healthy surroundings.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII

## I RECEIVE SIKH BAPTISM

About this time, 1895, I felt the need for the solace of religion. I was now 33 years old. By chance my attention was drawn to the recitation of the *Rah Ras* by a sister of mine. I heard: "According as their understanding tells them different people interpret Thee, O, Lord ! Thy created work cannot be estimated, neither can it be judged how Thou hast set up the Universe !"\* Why should not I, I said to myself, follow the wake of this unique teacher who is so catholic, who has no pathies or anti-pathies, who does not pretend to know the mysterious Being that has made the cosmos, or to map out His handwork, who, elsewhere in his works, condemns the spurious belief in Divine Incarnation, and whose divinity pervades, here, there and everywhere, and in all directions, in the form of love and harmony ! The answer to this query was my formal baptism into the *Khalsa* creed.t

\* *Ap apni budh hai jeti,  
Barnat bhin bhin tohe teti;  
Tumra lakha na jae pasara,  
Kih bidh saja pralham samara.*

Guru Govind Singh, *Benati, Chaupai*.

f During our evening rambles at Lahore in March-June 1931, Bhagatji one day thus related to me the story of his becoming a baptised *Singh* :

"On my hearing the *Benati Chaupai* of Guru Govind Singh, I was very much impressed by the unpretentious and sublime teachings of the Great Master and I decided once for all to accept him as my Saviour.

[ Continued on the next page.

Immediately after my admission into Panth Khalsa (Church Puritan) I conceived the idea of uniting the whole Sikh community of the district by a network of Singh Sabhas and of carrying on educational propaganda through these bodies. There was already a Singh Sabha in Rawalpindi, but in name only. True, it had a building of its own, which had been decreed in favour of the Singh Sabha by the local judicial courts, thanks to the indefatigable efforts of my uncle Bhagat Heera Nand, Vice-President of the Sabha. Previously it was in possession of the *Sadhu* in charge of the Dera of Bhai Ram Singh on the river Leh. True also that its President, Chaudhri Gurmukh Singh, was a big landed proprietor and some Babus from mufassil stations were its members. But the weekly meetings were poorly attended. The income from subscriptions and donations was barely sufficient for the maintenance of the *Granthi*. I was its Secretary for a couple of years or so. And I remember how I found it difficult to provide *Prasad* for the *Sangat* on Sunday meetings. On the birth-anniversaries of Guru Nanak and Guru Govind Singh, which we celebrated with great *eclat*, I had to spend from Rs. 70/- to Rs. 100/- on each occasion from my own pocket

[ Continued from the last page.

"I began to study the Sikh scriptures with a *Granthi* of Rawalpindi and expressed a desire to be admitted into the Khalsa Panth. But Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi hesitated to administer the *Pahul* to me till S. Sujan Singh and some other Sikhs assured him of my earnestness. Evidently he was afraid lest I should, under some other influences, later on, renounce the Sikh faith. However, when Sardar Sujan Singh and other prominent Sikhs of the city accompanied me to the Gurdwara, the Baba was pleased to administer the baptism to me and I became a full-fledged Khalsa. My father had, perhaps, some misgivings in his mind. But he wished me to remain *pacca* in my new faith. One day when I was washing my beard, he said : '*Eh his tarah nibhegi } Dekheen hun kujh hor na kar baitheen*, i.e. How will this all succeed ? See that you do not now change your mind.' This struck the inner cords of my mind. And I was deeply absorbed in my thoughts when a Bhai of a Gurdwara, who was a friend of mine, asked me as to what I was thinking about. I related to him my father's remarks. He told me that it was easy and that I should frequent the congregations of the Sikhs to remain *pacca*". — G.

which meant my whole monthly income. It was very rarely that a similar amount was collected from the rest of the Sabhaites and the sympathisers of the Sabha. The reason was that at that time the influence of Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi was predominant over the whole *ilaqa* and the leaders of the Singh Sabha movement had forfeited Baba Sahib's sympathy as already mentioned in the foregoing pages. His following, therefore, fought shy of the Singh Sabha movement. In fact, people generally had practically boycotted it. I wanted to so behave as to serve as a link between Baba Sahib and the Singh Sabha people all over the province. He was very fond of me and from his loving treatment of me in the public *diwans* held in Damdama Sahib, when he invariably saw that I was seated by his right side, most men, who came for his *darshan* from distant places, thought that I was closely related to him and bowed to me as I came out or when they saw me on the public roads. Even the big people of my own town began to hold me in special regard and they seemed to me so gracious and so kind that I thought that if I could prevail upon Baba Sahib to accept the patronage of my educational propaganda, money would rain like water. But this was not to be as would appear later. Ultimately I had to depend on my own resources.

## CHAPTER XXXIV

### FIRST PARCHAR SABHA IN THE PROVINCE STARTED

Although every Sikh temple is a seat of *parchar* more or less, and all Nirmala and Udasi *Sadhus* serve as preachers, they fail to give best results for they do not work in unison and have no constructive programmes. To remedy this defect, I formed an association, consisting of some Sikhs in my own *mahalla* on whose co-operation, I believed, I could fully rely, under the name Khalsa Dharam-Parcharak Sabha, Rawalpindi. The monthly subscription amounted to something like twenty rupees per mensem. This amount was augmented by *atta* collections every Sunday. This humble association supported a young *updeshak* from Gujranwala, who was given Rs. 20/- per mensem as salary plus actual out of pocket expenses when on duty in the mufassil. He knew nothing of *Gurbani*, but he could deliver long harangues like Arya Samajists which I hated. In fact, so long as I was Secretary of the Rawalpindi Singh Sabha I never allowed anyone to stand and lecture. Neither did I allow anyone to deliver *Kathas* from Guru Granth Sahib or to indulge in extraneous references. I made the *updeshak* to understand that he was never to indulge in public-speaking; that all that he had to do was to visit Dharamsalas in the mufassil and let me have a list of names of people religiously inclined whose sympathies I would later enlist by inviting them to my place and explaining to them my reform project. His leisure hours the *updeshak* could employ in the intensive study of Gurbani with the help of saintly scholars like Mahant Nihal Singh of Thoha Khalsa. To this, our new missionary agreed. Actual experience soon belied my long cherished expectations.

My rich friends and acquaintances refused to open their purse strings. Perhaps they believed my scheme to be a quixotic one. As a matter of fact our income from *atta* collections varied in the ratio of the distances of the mansions of rich people from those of the houses of the poor and the middle class people. Strange though it would appear, our income decreased as we approached the mansions of the rich and increased again as we proceeded further away from them. But this did not discourage us. We had made up our minds to succeed and we did succeed. Our generous patrons were ladies. On the occasion of a *Gursaptmi*\* festival, I remember, as we passed through streets singing divine hymns and selling earthen lamps in thousands for the purpose of illumination, disregarding wind and rain and the soiling of our clothes, they vied with one another in contributing to our success.

\*. Poh *sudi* 7, birth anniversary of Guru Govind Singh.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### SINGH SABHA ESTABLISHED AT GUJRAKHAN

I had a friend in the person of *Bhai Sahib* Manna Singh,\* a saintly Sikh and the most illustrious member of the Nirankari community, next to the Guru of this sect. He was a very impressive singer of divine music, the like of whom I have not met again. His *katha* from *Guru Granth Sahib* was also impressive. The Singh Sabha had no one to recite *kathas* at its weekly Sunday meetings. And I remember how eagerly all waited for Bhai Sahib's

\* Bhai Manna Singh was the right hand man of Baba Sahib Ratta, the then head of the Nirankari community. He was the son of Bhai Ram Singh of Rawalpindi and was born in 1900 Bk., 1843 A.D. He was one of the leading Sikh musicians of his days and was an eminent expounder of the Sikh scriptures. The popularization of the Anand marriage ceremony and other Sikh rites in Pothohar is mostly due to Bhai Manna Singh's missionary zeal. He died at Rawalpindi on 25 September, 1903 (13 Assu, 1960 Bk.) —G.

f The Nirankari community of the Sikhs is a puritan body founded by Baba Dayal (1783-1854) in the beginning of the nineteenth century. He preached the faith of the Sikh Gurus in its pristine purity and inculcated the adoration of nothing but the *Guru Granth Sahib* and the performance of all Sikh religious and social ceremonies according to Sikh practices, unaffected by Hindu influences. On the death of Baba Dayal on 30 January, 1855 (18 Magh, 1911 Bk.), he was succeeded by his son Baba Darbara Singh (1814-70), who, in turn, bequeathed his high office on his death on 12 February, 1870 (3 Phagan, 1926 Bk.), to his younger brother Baba Sahib Ratta. It is to Baba Sahib Ratta's time that this chapter refers. He died on January 3, 1909, and was succeeded by Baba Gurdit Singh, who lived up to April 26, 1947. The present head of the Nirankari community is Baba Hara Singh with his headquarters at Chandigarh in Sector 21. —G.

arrival on these occasions. Once I broached to him the idea of establishing a Singh Sabha at Gujarkhan, the principal growing townlet in the centre of Pothohar, which I wanted to make the centre of my work also. He agreed. My only acquaintance there was *Sardar Sahib* Doctor Sobha Singh Mehta of Kuntrila, and a relative of Sardar Jai Singh, deceased, of Mian Ahmada, whose handsome figure and bright smiling face, like those of Sardar Kirpal Singh of Rawalpindi and Sardar Thakar Singh Sandhanwalia, father of Sardar Gurbachan Singh, District Judge, who fled to Aden to see his kinsman Maharajah Dalip Singh but never returned, I can never forget. Accompanied by my pupil Dyal Singh, a man of unsurpassed eloquence in Gurbani, and about a couple of dozen members of our Kirtan party, I proceeded to Gujarkhan by rail. We put up at the Dharamsala in the Mandi. It had a spacious hall with a spacious compound. It had more the appearance of a *Serai* than of temple. Dyal Singh went to Chaudhri Narain Singh, father of Sardar Bahadur Sunder Singh, Honorary Magistrate, in whose Dharamsala there were morning and evening gatherings of the local Sikh gentry, to enquire if he would permit our party to join the morning congregation. He was the leading disciple of Baba Khem Singh and was thus not quite well disposed towards us. But the good old man was not so ungracious as to refuse us entry into the temple. We were the first to arrive there early in the dawn. These meetings usually lasted for an hour or so, for the congregation consisted mostly of businessmen. That day the morning sitting lasted till 11 A.M. Bhai Manna Singh's *kirtan* was so sweet and heart-appealing and Bawa Wahiguru Singh's *hatha* was so illumining and impressive that the congregation refused to permit us to depart without wresting from us the promise to give them another entertainment. This was an amazing success; We were doubtful of even obtaining a hearing, so antagonistic were Baba Khem Singh's followers to Singh Sabha propaganda. But, thanks to the Guru, the reception accorded to us was a pleasing surprise. Our *Jathedar*, Bhai Manna Singh, could well say, like Julius Caesar, "I came, I saw, I conquered." At the evening gathering, which was very largely attended, I proposed the establishment of Singh Sabha at Gujarkhan. There was nothing novel in what I

said. They would continue to hold their morning service, but at weekly gatherings they could meet and discuss matters relating to the uplift of the community, simply translating into action what they learnt from the scriptures daily. Lala Nand Lai, a cloth merchant, who was a Sanatanist Hindu, stood up to oppose me, but he was so clumsy in the exposition of his views that Chaudhri Narain Singh, true and brave Sikh as he was, snubbed the interrupter and boldly declared himself in favour of my proposal. And what was still more welcome, he agreed to my request to offer *ardas* for the establishment of the Singh Sabha at Gujarkhan and allowed its meetings to be held in his Dharamsala. He also gladly accepted the office of the President of the Sabha. The whole congregation escorted us late in the night to the Railway Station singing sacred music. The success was an eventful one. It brought me the support of some of the leading families in the district and the sympathy and co-operation of Sardar Bahadur Sunder Singh, which stood me in good stead later, for it was Sardar Sunder Singh who successfully carried out my idea of establishing a Khalsa High School in Gujarkhan, though much later than I had wished.\*

\* The G.N. Khalsa High School, Gujarkhan, was founded on 16th January, 1919, with Primary classes. It was raised to the High standard in April 1919 with 250 boys on its rolls. During the Akali and non-co-operation movements of the twenties, the school had to pass through various vicissitudes, but with the efforts of Sardar Bahadur Sunder Singh, its founder, and the guidance and help of Sir Sunder Singh Majithia, Bhai Jodh Singh, M.A., and Bhagat Lakshman Singh, the school was able to secure recognition. Government grant-in-aid and the building grant. The School possessed a beautiful building of its own on the Grand Trunk Road on the site suggested by Bhagat Lakshman Singh. After the exodus of the non-Muslims from the western Punjab as a result of the partition of the country in 1947, the Gujarkhan School was re-established in the Model Town, Ludhiana.—G.



## CHAPTER XXXVI

## LOVE FOR SANSKRIT AND PUNJABI LORE

Perhaps it was because of my devotion to the heroes of antiquity, inherited from my great grandfather, Bhagat Dyal Chind, or because of my close association with Hindu and Sikh saints from my childhood upwards, I sought to do my very best for the promotion of the study of Sanskrit. During the days of my childhood, there was no arrangement for teaching this language in Rawalpindi. Pandit Bishan Das of the Hindu Pathshala was a very good and saintly man. He held classes of half a dozen Brahman boys, but his work being not methodical, I could not avail myself of his assistance in my quest for Sanskrit knowledge. But I saw that my own younger brothers had the best grounding in it. My younger brother, Bhagat Balmokand, B. A., LL. B., was the idol of our town-folk for his scholarly attainments in Sanskrit and for the enthusiasm he inspired. When I worked for three and a half years in the Mission College, I endeavoured to see that Hindu and Sikh students took up Sanskrit in place of Persian, which I thought had no meaning for Sikhs and Hindus. The new Manager, the Reverend Mr. Thompson, held me in great regard. He lent me his full support. There was only one Pandit, a Shastri. He was no doubt an esteemable man. But I could not see how he should have had only two pupils, one his own younger brother and the other a Bania boy from the cantonment. He was made to go. In a few days I was able to persuade a good number of Hindu and Sikh lads to give up Persian in the IV High Class and take up Sanskrit. One of them, Professor Jodh

Singh, M. A.,\* Professor of Divinity in Khalsa College, Amritsar, now Principal, gratefully remembers how his knowledge of Sanskrit has been helpful to him in his intensive study of Sikh scriptures. In fact it was some such belief that had led me to advise my Sikh pupils to prefer Sanskrit to Persian. With the same end I saw that Sikh boys gave up Urdu and took up Punjabi. I also saw that Sanskrit was taught from the IV Primary Class. I went straight to the boys. The teacher, a Maulavi, wisely stood aside; for he knew what influence I wielded in the institution. Addressing a Hindu child I said, "*Kaka*" (a Punjabi term of endearment), "will you give up Persian and take up Sanskrit instead?" "Why should I? I am not going to turn into a Brahman priest", was the reply. I then turned to a Musalman child. "Kaka," repeated I, "Will you take up Sanskrit in place of Persian?" "Am I a Hindu?" was this child's reply. I again turned to the previous Hindu child and said, "Are you a Musalman, my boy? Yes, you are. You see you are learning a language of the Musalmans." And, added I, "Is your mother's name Bibi Jamalo or Begam Bano?" "No, my mother's name is Bishen Devi" was the angry reply. I repeated the same questions to other Hindu and Musalman children of the same class and got nearly similar replies. It so happened that one of these children was the son of a Hindu notable. He was an intimate friend of my father. When he came to know that I had taken such liberty with his child, he came to remonstrate with me for what seemed to him simply scandalous on my part. On seeing him I stepped out of my room, paid my obeisance to him and on learning his errand I took him to his child's class and held a rehearsal of yesterday's programme. Instead of giving expression to his anger, for which he had taken the trouble to visit me, he caressed and blessed me and permitted his boy to take up Sanskrit. The example was contagious. Any number of Hindu and Sikh boys in all classes came forward with applications

\* He, Dr. Bhai Jodh Singh, M.A., D. Litt., is now (December, 1964) the Vice-Chancellor of Punjabi University, Patiala.

for permission to take up Sanskrit and they were so many that I had to engage two highly qualified Pundits through the good offices of Lala Hans Raj, Principal of the D.A.-V. College, Lahore, and Lala Munshi Ram (afterwards Swami Shradhanand), Pleader, of Jullundur. One of them, Pandit Jati Ram of Patiala, was extremely helpful to me. I also arranged for Punjabi teaching in the school. The services of Bawa Wahiguru Singh were retained for this purpose. The result was that in the course of a couple of years, out of about seven hundred, nearly half the number took up Sanskrit as their compulsory classic. The other half mostly consisted of Musalman boys. About seventy scholars took up Punjabi in place of Urdu. This was most encouraging to me, bearing in mind that the school was an American United Presbyterian Mission institution. It betokened the intense regard in which the management held me. And to show how deep was the confidence I inspired, Mr. Thompson appointed me Superintendent of Sanskrit and Punjabi teaching in the school and I had a free hand in the appointment, dismissal, and grant of leave and increment to the teachers of these subjects.

All this was more than enough to excite envy and jealousy. Naturally the Muslim boys felt a prompting for learning Arabic. A deputation of their community waited upon the Manager to make provision for the teaching of the subject. He expressed his willingness to accede to their request, but asked the deputationists to provide for an endowment, the interest of which should be sufficient to meet the expenses on this account. This was tantamount to a refusal of the request and showed a want of sympathy with the aim of the deputationists, particularly when no such condition was laid in the matter of the appointment of Sanskrit and Punjabi teachers. The result was an agitation against the Mission School, resulting in the establishment of the local Islamia High School. My name was unnecessarily dragged into the controversy by Qazi Siraj-ud-Din, an adventurous youngman from Bhera, later Bar-at-Law and public prosecutor, Rawalpindi. He openly insinuated in the columns of his paper, the *Chaudhwin Sadi*, that I had something to do with the refusal of the Mission authorities to listen to the request made in behalf of the local Musalmans. The real cause of the failure of the

deputation I knew to be the indiscriminate and violent abuse of the Christian peoples, Europeans and Americans, by the Muslim press, including the *Chaudhwin Sadi*, provoked by the Greeco-Turkish war that was then going on. That was the most inopportune time to expect an indulgent treatment at the hands of any well-informed and self-respecting Christian.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

## SARAGARHI HEROES

## TECHNICAL INSTITUTE STARTED AT LAHORE

It is not a small privilege to be born in a big town. The city of Rawalpindi, though not very large those days, was of great importance on account of its close proximity to the North Western Frontier and its having the biggest cantonment in India. As such it was the centre of military activity. Whenever an expeditionary force or a mission of peace went to Kabul, or any other place on that side of the frontier, it had to pass through Rawalpindi. The first display of splendour and power by the Government in my memory was the great Durbar held in honour of Amir Abdur Rahman of Kabul during the year 1880. The Feudatory Chiefs lay encamped all round the city, while the additional British and Indian forces were accommodated in the Military barracks in the cantonment. For the reception of the Amir a city of canvas was erected and money was lavishly spent in decorating the parlours of the palatial tent, wherein His Highness himself had to be accommodated. But, God, as he is wont to do on occasions, seems to have taken umbrage at this show of strength and greatness even by the great power over whose territories the sun never sets. In the twinkling of an eye, as it were, rain and deluge swept away the erstwhile pompous canvas palace, and all other Imperial gewgaws. It was some such visitation which had led someone to exclaim "Vanity ! Vanity ! All is Vanity !"

For years afterwards I never cared to stir out of my nest even for witnessing army manoeuvres held annually or cared to notice what laurels this or that commander had won. But on receiving Sikh baptism my whole outlook of life underwent a marked change. Thenceforward I was destined to become an exponent of the wishes

of the leaders of my new community. Whenever an address had to be written or presented, my name suggested itself to them. And the call invariably received a ready response from me, for by so doing I was turning such ceremonial felicitations to the best advantage. Like the great Sheikh Saadi, I believed in the maxim that when two hearts work in unison even mountainous obstacles give way. And I can truly say that whatever success attended me in my public career was the direct result of the good feeling that men in authority entertained for me. To come to the theme of this chapter, it was some such feeling that had led me to join a deputation of the Sikhs of my town and present an address to the victor of Tirah, Major-General Sir William Lockhart,\* in the month of January, 1898.

\* The copy of the address I have mislaid somewhere; but General William Lockhart's reply I subjoin here only to show the warmth of feeling permeating the whole passage. This reciprocity of good feeling was undoubtedly an asset to both the civil and military British officers and their comrades in arms. But this was long long ago. World conditions have changed every one's outlook. And we no more hear of such exchanges of courtesy. —BLS.

*General Lockhart's Reply*

You have done me a great honour and I thank you cordially for it.

For no race have I a more sincere regard than that which I entertain for the Sikhs who as enemies won our admiration half a century ago, and have since then furnished the forces of the Queen with thousands of gallant soldiers and men who have shown their heroism wherever there was fighting to be done, in India and on its borders, in China, Afghanistan, Burma and Africa.

The splendid conduct of the 15th and 36th Sikhs recently in Tirah has been made known throughout the empire, and indeed throughout the world, and has been applauded not only in Great Britain and the Colonies, but in every country in Europe.

May the heroic national spirit of the *Khalsa* continue and flourish, and in future wars, may Sikhs ever be found fighting as trusty comrades side by side with their British brothers-in-arms.

Rawalpindi,  
8th January, 1898

W.A.S. Lockhart

It was in connection with this Tirah expedition that the small garrison of the 36th Sikhs, consisting of 21 men, held a Military post near the village of Saragarhi for days surrounded by thousands of the enemy. Their provisions and even ammunition ran short, and they were cut off to a man; but before this was the case they had felled hundreds of the besieging hosts to the ground and then died the death of martyrs.

[ The undaunted bravery and unflinching devotion to duty of the 21 Sikhs of Saragarhi fame have since passed into a proverb. The little fort, then garrisoned by this noble band, is about one and a half miles from the Fort Lockhart and is situated in the midst of the Samana hills at an altitude of about six thousand feet. It was felt absolutely necessary to maintain this fort as a transmitting signalling station between Gulistan and Fort Lockhart. On the 12th September, 1897, an overwhelming force of Afridis numbering several thousand besieged this petty fortress and assaulted it in force time after time but the gallant little band, who held the walls, repulsed the attack with terrible slaughter. No reinforcement could arrive either from Fort Lockhart or Gulistan. The enemy grew in numbers every hour and continued a hot fire on the defenders from a few yards' distance. 'The fate of the gallant band of twenty one was certain. It was only a matter of time. The door was attacked and the little garrison slowly but surely was reduced by the enemy's marksmen. For six and a half hours these heroes fought their great fight and held their own until it became impossible with the few unwounded men left to arm both the walls and guard the entrance door. The heavy door was attacked with axes, but for long it resisted all the attempts to break it in. Now the attack on the walls was successful and the enemy crowding over their dead and wounded entered the breach and fought their way into the enclosure. But even yet all was not over.

'Stubbornly the noble few who were left retreated into the *Serai*, and hard indeed each defender die. Surrounded on all hands, the garrison was mercilessly cut down.

'One solitary Sikh only was now left and he defended the guard-room. Magnificent was the resistance which he offered, and

alone at his post he accounted for twenty of the enemy—one for each of his dead comrades. It is consoling to think that even at the end it was not to the weapons of his overwhelming foes that this hero fell. During this last glorious stand, when the Afridis were being hewn down by the solitary sepoy, the enemy, despairing of conquering the last of the Sikhs, set fire to the guard-room, and fighting with his face to the foe, the last Khalsa soldier finally perished in the flames.

'How dearly our Sikh sepoys sold their lives may be gathered from the fact that the enemy admitted that close upon two hundred of themselves had been killed outright, whilst the numbers of wounded must have greatly exceeded this total.'

'Thus died a band of heroes faithful unto death to the Sirkar whose salt they had eaten. Such valorous deeds need no eulogy. Well may the Khalsa nation be proud of her sons, and England of the brave men who fight and die in her quarrels in far distant land.'—*The Pathan Revolt in North-West India* by H. Woosnam Mills, Second edition, Lahore, 1897.

In addition to a cenotaph erected on the spot by the Government of India, another was raised by public subscription and Government aid at Amritsar, opposite the Government High School, in the shape of a Gurdwara, through the efforts of Saragarhi Memorial Committee of which Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia was the Secretary. For detailed account of the work of the Memorial Committee, see Sardar Sunder Singh's *Report*.

The following is the inscription on the tablets placed on the walls of the cenotaphs :

"The Government of India has caused this tablet to be erected to the memory of the 21 non-commissioned officers and men of the 36th (Sikh) Regiment of Bengal Infantry whose names are engraved below as a perpetual record of the heroism shown by these gallant soldiers who died at their post in defence of the Fort of Saragarhi on the 12th September, 1897, fighting against overwhelming numbers thus proving their loyalty and devotion to their sovereign, the

Queen Empress of India, and gloriously maintaining the reputation of the Sikhs for unflinching bravery on the field of battle." ]

Naturally this brave stand won the Sikh heroes name and fame throughout the British Empire. Naturally also, every well informed Sikh felt proud over the incident. But I was surprised to notice that the appeal for funds to commemorate the incident received very poor response from the community, either for want of sustained propaganda in that behalf, or, perhaps, because the organizers had no well thought out scheme for eliciting popular sympathy. The Memorial that stands in Ferozepore in the shape of a costly cenotaph was built out of Government contributions and from funds collected through Government influence. How good it would have been if the immense amount of money spent over this monument had been devoted to the maintenance and education of the children of the martyred men. But the British bureaucrat is in his heart of hearts a believer in stocks and stones, provided, of course, if they have an imposing and artistic look. In the year 1931, when I invited the attention of a brilliant British administrator, occupying a high position under the Punjab Government, to the wasteful expense incurred in putting up Government buildings in New Delhi costing crores of rupees, I was told in all seriousness that the Viceroy of India held the position of the Mughal Emperors and had, thus, to surround himself with all pomp and glory. And I cannot say that this representative of authority was not right in his view to a great extent. For, leaving aside all cant, it is really wealth which is a man's measure in society. Possessing it, you can lord it over other people. And if you renounce it, you become a *Mahatma* and command respect and attention that you never had before. Its want means penury and grovelling, sneaking existence. And so long as men differ in mental equipment, wealth and power, and pomp and show, they will continue to overawe and astonish. Who can deny that our present day rulers are very keen observers and understand their business ?

When I am saying all this I have in mind the extreme backwardness of the Sikh community.- It mostly consists of men

of peasant class who live in villages and are, therefore, ignorant of the influences that act and react on men's lives all the world over. The historical incident of Saragarhi had no meaning for them. I doubt very much if one in one thousand of them ever heard of the Saragarhi episode. And the few well-to-do persons who understood it quite ingeniously believed that it would be, indeed, quite an adequate reward to the Sikh community if the Government withdrew criminal proceedings against a Sikh Judicial officer, suspected to be corrupt. Needless to say that these high-placed men were near relatives of the officer in question. Needless also to say that the Government put this petition in the waste paper basket. The suspected man, timely informed of his impending arrest, fled from the country and returned several years after through the good offices in his behalf of a powerful Sikh chief.

I was in those days Secretary of the Singh Sabha, Rawalpindi. I was approached by an agent of the aforesaid Sardar to get resolutions passed in Rawalpindi and Peshawar and see that Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi and Sardar Bahadur Sujana Singh, CLE., the Rawalpindi millionaire, presided over public gatherings in this behalf. I tried to carry out this behest, but the Baba and Sardar Bahadur Sujana Singh politely expressed their inability to support a man in the bad books of the Government. They were too shrewd to be guilty of such an endeavour or rather impolitic step.

I am glad an opportunity soon arose to enable me to suggest a better use of popular enthusiasm in another connection. I had read in a United Provinces newspaper of a movement by Musalmans to commemorate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Empress Victoria by establishing some public institution for the use of their community. Why should not Hindus and Sikhs of the Punjab, I thought, make a similar move ? With this idea I approached Malik Khazan Singh, a local *Rais* and Honorary Magistrate and a distant relative of mine, and requested him to preside over a public meeting in the Town Hall where I would explain the advantages of commemorating the benign rule of one of the noblest women that had ever held sway. He agreed. And which sane man would refuse such a distinction ? The meeting presided over

by him was well attended. I then arranged another meeting with this aim in the same place under the chairmanship of my young friend Sardar Hardit Singh, son of Rai Bahadur Sardar Sujan Singh deceased and father of Sardar Sohan Singh and Sardar Bahadur Mohan Singh, Member India Council, wherein it was decided that I should be deputed, on behalf of Rawalpindi Hindus and Sikhs, to visit leading Hindus and Sikhs in Lahore and ask them to organize an all-Punjab Hindu and Sikh Committee to carry out their aim. This I did. I saw several of my friends there, for instance Lala Ruchi Ram Sahni, M.A., of the Lahore Government College, Lala Harkishan Lai, B.A. (Cantab.), Bar-at-Law, the great Punjabi pioneer of industry and, later, Agriculture Minister to Punjab Government, Rai Bahadur Lala Lall Chand, President D.A.-V. College Managing Committee, and, later, Judge, Chief Court, Rai Sahib Lala (afterwards Rai Bahadur) Bishen Das Hoon, Assistant Manager, North Western Railway, and Bakhshi Jaishi Ram, Advocate, Punjab Chief (now High) Court (father of the Hon'ble Justice Bakhshi Tek Chand, M.A.) and one of the most devoted patriots and sincerest of men that I have ever known. They all approved of the idea and started work with Bakhshi Jaishi Ram as Secretary. To popularize the idea I was deputed for a month, for which the Rawalpindi Gordon Mission College authorities granted necessary permission, to visit Muzaffargarh, Dera Ghazi Khan, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Kohat and Peshawar. At most of the places I saw leading men and held talks with them. Sardar Sant Singh *Vakil* and Lala Daulat Ram, brother of Lala Harkishan Lai, Bar-at-Law, were very helpful at Dera Ghazi Khan. Lala Jindha Ram, a leading lawyer of Dera Ismail Khan, and Lala Kahan Chand *Vakil* of Bannu were also very sympathetic. At Peshawar I addressed a public meeting under the chairmanship of the late Rai Bahadur Lala Lorinda Mai, the leading Hindu *Rais*. Then I returned to duty in Rawalpindi. I had omitted visiting Montgomery and Multan. At these places public meetings were addressed by Babu Kali Prasano Chatterji, Assistant Editor of the *Tribune*. About this time the Lahore Committee had held successful meetings to win popular sympathy. The idea materialized and resulted in the

establishment of the Hindu Diamond Jubilee Technical Institute. In the course of time as a result of the efforts of its devoted workers, particularly the Secretary, Bakhshi Jaishi Ram, and Mr. Justice Chatterji, President, the Institute had a magnificent building near the Railway station and a highly qualified staff. In answer to the question why a purely Hindu name was given to the institute, it may be simply stated that the original promoters believed the term Hindu connoted Hindus and Sikhs both—an opinion which I also then shared. Another reason may have been that excepting Bhais Gurmukh Singh and Jawahar Singh, who were too busy with the Khalsa College to find time for anything else, there was not any other Sikh of requisite ability and status to participate in the movement for the establishment of the institute.

I may also state here that before proceeding to Lahore I had received from my esteemed friend, Lala Hans Raj Sahni, a leading Vakil in Rawalpindi, a letter addressed to him by Sardar (afterwards Nawab) Mohammad Hayat Khan of Wah, near Hassan Abdal, suggesting that another public meeting in connection with the Diamond Jubilee might be held under his (Sardar Mohammad Hayat Khan's) chairmanship. But the suggestion was not taken up because from the very first the idea was not to include any Musalman in the movement. Once the institute was established under happy auspices, I, too, left taking any interest in it. For a number of years Bakhshi Jaishi Ram invited me on the occasions of Prize Distribution ceremony of the institute, but I was able to attend only one such function. In one of his letters to Lala Hans Raj he had the courtesy to remember me as founder of the institute, an exaggerated out-pouring of his emotional heart. The truth really was that only the idea was mine. It materialized through the selfless efforts of Bakhshi Jaishi Ram and the good men who lent him their unstinted support.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

## I MEET MR. MACAULIFFE

It was during my tenure of office in the Rawalpindi Mission College that I first came to know Mr. Macauliffe, the great Englishman, who had resigned his high position in the Indian Civil Service and had spent over two decades of his life in his research work in connection with the Sikh religion and later brought out his monumental work\* comprising six big volumes at a tremendous expense and trouble. It was the practice with him to send printed proofs of his translation of the Sikh scriptures to select Sikhs residing in different parts of the province with a request for opinion and critical suggestions. One such proof was received by me. Mr. Macauliffe was so pleased with my criticism that he actually requested me to translate Japji Sahib for him. The translation of Japji Sahib forming part of his work is partly from my pen, but chiefly from that of my deceased youngest brother, Bhagat Balmokand, B.A..LL.B., who, besides being a Sanskrit scholar himself, had the assistance of a highly learned Udasi Sadhu of our city. On the receipt of our translation he sent for me to Amritsar, where he was then putting up in a hired bungalow, in the cantonment, so that I might help him in its revision. What was my wonder when I saw gathered at his house the most learned Gyanis (Sikh divines) of that time ; for instance Gyani Sardul Singh, Bhai Hazara Singh, father of Sardar Aya Singh,

Extra Assistant Commissioner, both of Amritsar, Sant Hazara Singh of Gujrat, Mahant Prem Singh of Sialkot, Gyani Badan Singh of Faridkot and three or four more Sikh divines whose names I now do not recollect. To this council each and every line was submitted and it was only after receiving their criticism that he adopted it. It took me full one month to attend these sittings. The amount of labour and expense may be judged from the fact that all scriptural texts were similarly dealt with. I was paid one month's salary plus my railway fare from Rawalpindi and back, for, as then situated, I could not afford to work for him gratis. I presume he must have incurred similar expense on most of the learned men he sent for and consulted. His sacrifice and consecration of a whole life to the service of Sikhs and Sikhism filled me with great admiration for him. I visited him several times again whenever he returned to this country and remained in touch with him till he finally left this country and then passed away at his home in England. In 1839 he met me in Lahore when I was Secretary of the Hindu Family Relief Fund there. It was at his instance that the Lahore Sikhs celebrated the second century of the inauguration of the Khalsa Panth, when he contributed rupees one hundred towards expenses in this behalf. It was in these days also that I publicly brought attention to the great work he had done for the Sikhs through the *Khalsa*, the first English organ of the Sikhs, which had been started in January 1899 under my editorship. To this tribute for his eminent service to the Sikh cause he assigned a prominent place in his preface to the first volume. He wanted to mention my name in his work along with those of his other helpers, but I refused coming into lime light in this fashion.

He had a grievance against the Government which refused to recognize his work. He believed that he had done a signal service to it by earning the gratitude of the Sikh community for Government in allowing him to undo the mischief which Dr. Ernest Trump, a German missionary, had done to them by his caricature of the Sikh scriptures. He was offered a paltry sum of rupees five thousand as a gift by the Govern-

\* *The Sikh Religion, Its Gurus, Sacred, Writing and Authors.* Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1909.

nient of India which he indignantly refused\*. He had also a grievance against the Amritsar Sikhs against whom he wrote a satire and sent it to me with a request that I should get it published. I refused compliance, but, later, I came to know that their treatment of him was very shabby. What this was due to I do not know. Perhaps it was because, as was hinted to me, then, they had an idea to bring out a translation of Sikh scriptures themselves, and, therefore, looked upon Mr. Macauliffe with a feeling of jealousy. If there was any such idea it was decidedly wrong and unworkable, for to speak nothing of that time, even now a days there is not one Sikh of Mr. Macauliffe's learning and resources. True Mr. Macauliffe was not a Sikh, when he wrote his monumental work and his language, that of his translations excepted, fails to inspire much enthusiasm, but it is plain and simple and conveys to the reader in a clear, lucid style the unvarnished message of the holy Gurus. Hence it will be easily understood that when shortly after his demise a resolution was moved at the Ambala session of the Sikh Educational Conference in 1912 to give an expression to the community's regret and its indebtedness to him, it met with opposition, and had it not been for the fact that I had previously taken care to warn the President, Diwan Bahadur Leela Ram Singh of Hyderabad (Sind), who, was a great scholar himself and knew and respected Mr. Macauliffe, it would not have been carried. But

\* In his letter of 27 September, 1912, from London, Mr. Macauliffe wrote to Bhagat Lakshman Singh : "The Punjab Government recommended that I should get Rs. 15,000 (£1,000). The Secretary of State, Lord Morley, reduced the honorarium to Rs. 5,000 and the Punjab Government for fear of offending him would make no further representation in my favour although he expressed himself ready to listen to it. The India Office published Dr. Trump's work at great expense and his insult to the Sikhs and their religion suited the Christian Missionary policy of the Government. It is clear it was with that object that Sir Macworth Young sought to perpetuate the insults and wrote a secret letter to the Government of India against my work. His secret letter was accepted by the Government of India without any enquiry or due consideration and the Government of India forwarded it to the Secretary of State who accepted it in the same manner..." —G.

I should say that when I launched a scheme for commemorating Mr. Macauliffe's memory,\* the Amritsar leaders offered no opposition. A few of them, Sardar Bahadur (now Sir) Sunder Singh Majithia and Bhai Vir Singh, for instance, joyfully welcomed the idea and gave money contributions also. But the movement to start a library in Mr. Macauliffe's honour failed, despite the fact of the Lieutenant-Governor Sir Michael O'Dwyer's support who sent me a very encouraging letter, accompanied with a hundred rupees, as his own subscription, for public mind was more than occupied with the great European War and everybody, who had money, invested it in War loans, or in their business concerns, which in those days brought them booming profits. And though the Deputy Commissioner, Rawalpindi, Mr. Renouf, whom I approached with the idea of enlisting his active co-operation, plainly told me that there was not much chance of my meeting with success, I took three months' leave to tour over the province in this behalf. I failed, however, to rouse any enthusiasm. My friend Sardar Mehar Singh, Municipal Commissioner and Honorary Magistrate, Lahore, advised me to start the work of collecting subscriptions at Patiala where Bhai (now Sardar Bahadur) Kahan Singh, Mr. Macauliffe's close friend, to whom he had made over his work as a gift, wielded great influence. Bhai Kahan Singh approved the idea and held out the hope

\* Mr. Max Arthur Macauliffe, I. C. S., passed away in his house, Sinclair Gardens, West Kensington. London, on 15 March, 1913. In a public meeting at Rawalpindi on 18 March, 1913, to mourn the loss of Mr. Macauliffe, a resolution was passed to raise a memorial in his honour, and a committee of fourteen members with Bhagat Lakshman Singh as Secretary was appointed. This Committee became the nucleus of a bigger body called the Macauliffe Memorial Society, Rawalpindi, with the object 'to raise and maintain a library at Rawalpindi as a memorial to the late Mr. Macauliffe.' An appeal for funds was made to the Sikh public and the Government of the Punjab but owing to the Great War then raging at its highest, the response was not very encouraging. The funds collected by the Society, therefore, were, at the suggestion of Sir John Maynard, offered to the University of the Punjab. But as the University could not accept the trust on account of a constitutional objection, it was transferred to the Khalsa College Amritsar. —G.



that he would obtain the permission of His Highness the Maharaja Sir Bhupindra Singh to invite me there; but after several weeks waiting I returned to my post. I was able to collect only a few hundred rupees which I invested in a piece of land at Rawalpindi, in the hope that after the War my scheme might attract better sympathy. But this was not to be the case. I gave up the attempt and made over the money with me, rupees three thousand and a half, to Mr. Wathen, Principal, Khalsa College, Amritsar, for the endowment of a medal, in Mr. Macauliffe's memory, to be awarded for research work in Sikh history.\* With the accumulation of interest the amount has exceeded five thousand rupees. So great is the paucity of Sikh writers even now-a-days that for years the medal has not been availed of. I do hope, however, that the Managing Committee of the College will find itself in a position to supplement this amount and keep green the memory of this great Englishman in a more befitting manner.

\* The attention of the Managing Committee of the Khalsa College Amritsar was called in their meeting of 13 March, 1921, to the proceedings of the syndicate of the University of the Punjab dated 18 February, 1921, rejecting the offer of Bhagat Lakshman Singh regarding Macauliffe Memorial Trust on the plea that the competition prize was open only to the Sikhs and not to members of all communities. Mr. G.A. Wathen, the then Principal of the College, was authorized by the Committee to approach Bhagat Lakshman Singh to transfer the trust to Khalsa College. At the request of the Principal contained in his letter of 17 March, 1921, and on the approval of the rules for its administration by the Macauliffe Memorial Society the trust of Rs. 3245/- was made over to the Khalsa College, Amritsar, in June, 1921.—G.

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### I AM OFFERED EDITORSHIP OF THE TRIBUNE

1896-97

It was in these days that on the suggestion of Lala Harkishen Lai, the late Sardar Dyal Singh Majeethia, sent Lala Ram Chand, the old devoted manager of the *Tribune* to persuade me to accept the editorship of the paper. I was then very much content with my position in the Mission College Rawalpindi, and, therefore, did not feel any inclination to accept the offer. I went, however, to see him at his residence in Lahore to personally thank him for his good thoughts for me. I told him in the course of the interview, which lasted for more than a couple of hours, that my political views were quite in conflict with those which were propounded through his journal and, therefore, I would be placing myself in a very awkward position. A maturer study of world history, a subject which I then taught in the college, and of human psychology, had led me to believe that all progress was a silent, slow work like that of the holy Sikh Gurus, aiming at a unification of our nationals, by breaking the barriers that impeded their intercourse and divided man from man and from God Himself, and that being anti-British, anti-Muslim or anti-anybody or anything else, would only deepen the gulf that separated us from our fellow-men. Needless to say that I failed to convince the illustrious Sardar who was a staunch advocate of the Congress school of thought. I parted from him not without feeling a twitch of pain, for his ardent patriotism, his wealth of information and the earnestness with which he controverted my view of the mission of the holy Sikh Gurus, had won for him a place in my heart. Soon

that he would obtain the permission of His Highness the Maharaja Sir Bhupindra Singh to invite me there; but after several weeks waiting I returned to my post. I was able to collect only a few hundred rupees which I invested in a piece of land at Rawalpindi, in the hope that after the War my scheme might attract better sympathy. But this was not to be the case. I gave up the attempt and made over the money with me, rupees three thousand and a half, to Mr. Wathen, Principal, Khalsa College, Amritsar, for the endowment of a medal, in Mr. Macauliffe's memory, to be awarded for research work in Sikh history.\* With the accumulation of interest the amount has exceeded five thousand rupees. So great is the paucity of Sikh writers even now-a-days that for years the medal has not been availed of. I do hope, however, that the Managing Committee of the College will find itself in a position to supplement this amount and keep green the memory of this great Englishman in a more befitting manner.

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after the Sardar died, universally honoured, and I had no occasion to see him again and tell him how deeply I had felt beholden to him for his desire to chalk out, as he thought, a career of such usefulness to me and to the country generally.

In the year 1929 when I saw Lala Ram Chand in his *baithak* inside the Shah-Alami Gate, Lahore, he recalled his visit to me more than three decades back and told me how Sardar Sahib regretted my refusal to avail myself of his kind offer.

Whenever I am reminded of my interview with Sardar Dyal Singh Majeethia and his enthusiastic references to the Holy Gurus and the work of the illustrious veteran Khalsa chiefs I feel anguish at the thought of his having been discarded by his community which looked upon him as an apostate and as such unworthy of being seen. He was thinking of bequeathing his vast property for public weal, the property which he had inherited from his Sikh ancestors. I suggested to a couple of my colleagues on the Khalsa College Council to visit the Sardar and cultivate friendly relations with him with a view to persuading him to leave his estate for the uplift of the Sikh community of which several generations of his ancestors were leading Sardars, but they rejected my suggestion disdainfully. And strange though it might appear, these very men felt no hesitation in carousing in the banquets of other Sikh chieftains in and outside their states.

Sardar Dyal Singh's home life was not happy. He did not care to marry again. He chose to lead a single life, and, thus, left no offspring. There was a void in his heart. Somebody had to fill it. He was not a Sikh in the accepted sense. He was not a Hindu. He was not a Muslim, nor a Christian. The only people who belonged to none of these organizations, or who had no religious bias of any kind and thought themselves, or were believed to be, on a higher cultural plane, approached him. To men of this sort ultimately went the vast estate of a great Sikh dynasty carved by Sikh genius and built of Sikh blood-bricks. There is not one Sikh on the *Tribune* Trust or any other trust associated with Sardar Dyal Singh's memory. Little wonder, therefore, if on the staff of the *Tribune* there should be no Sikh "and the journal, though not

quite an anti-Sikh organ, should allow, inadvertently I believe, an occasional fling at the Sikhs. Little wonder also if on the occasion of Gurburb celebrations in the Dyal Singh College, Lahore,\* its professors should have had the temerity, as they showed in the year 1930, to openly flout Sikh opinion in their speeches in the matter of Sikh symbols and its Sikh *alumni* should not only have acclaimed such effusions, but should also have taken exception to my inviting in the columns of the *Khalsa* Principal Hem Raj's attention to his College *pandal* being made a rendezvous for anti-Sikh propaganda.

\* The Dyal Singh College, Lahore, as stated above, owes its origin to the noble generosity of Sardar Dyal Singh Majeethia. Its foundation stone was laid by His Honour Sir Louis Dane on 3rd May, 1910.—G.

## CHAPTER XL

## AT LAHORE AGAIN—THE KHALSA STARTED

Little did I know that not long after my refusal to accept Sardar Dyal Singh's offer to work on the staff of the *Tribune*, circumstances would arise which would make my position untenable in the Gordon Mission College, Rawalpindi, which I very much prized, and wherein I had won the regard and esteem of the Management as, perhaps, had never been the case with any one before me. As previously stated, I conceived the idea just after my accepting the Khalsa creed to form a network of educational institutions, consisting of a Khalsa High School in Rawalpindi city, Khalsa Anglo-Vernacular Middle Schools in Tehsil towns, and primary schools in big villages. It never occurred to me that a class-fellow of mine on the school staff, who had risen to position of responsibility through my own instrumentality and was in my confidence, would betray me for selfish ends and would unblushingly see his own father put as managing head of the Mission School of his village and would thus defeat the object I had in view. I regarded this move as a political danger, for I knew from experience that the Indian Christians, who were generally looked down upon by their countrymen, whether Hindus, Sikhs or Muslims, in their turn, posed as *Sahib log* (Europeans) and were, as a rule, not liberal in their sympathies, and were, thus, a sort of menace to my scheme for the spread of education in the villages on national lines. In this view, I now find I was rather wrong. In the present freedom movement—I am speaking of the period 1920 to 1941—the Indian Christians of better classes have stood shoulder to shoulder with their brethren of other faiths. So in an extraordinary meeting of the Rawalpindi Singh Sabha, I sounded a note of alarm and urged the need of

propaganda work to counteract this activity of the United American Presbyterian Mission. This fact was made known to the Manager, Dr. Barr, the same night. The following morning I received three months' salary in lieu of a formal notice to quit. Thus ended my term of service in the Mission College, Rawalpindi. Had Mr. Morrison or Mr. Thompson, who had reasons to appreciate the work I had put in for them, been in this country the dispute might have been amicably settled. But the former had proceeded home on leave, and the latter had been actually cashiered and sent back home for his inability to suppress his feelings at a session of the Mission in Sialkote, when he exposed the absurdity of sending to America glowing reports of conversions, year after year, when, in fact, there was as a general rule, no conversion from amongst the gentry of the indigenous population. The new Principal, Dr. Barr, was a very well-meaning man, but he was ill-advised in issuing an order forbidding my pupils in the College to attend the meeting held in the Arya Samaj Mandir, at a stone's throw, to present me with a farewell address. The result was a great commotion. Students and citizens demonstrated against the order. The meeting condemned Dr. Barr's action and eulogized my services in the cause of the study of Sanskrit and Punjabi. I was enthusiastically cheered and taken home in a big procession loaded with valuable presents. The same evening, through the good offices of my friends, Lala Harkrishan Lai and Rai Sahib Lala Bishan Das, President and Vice-President of the Fund respectively, I received by wire an order of appointment as Secretary Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund, Lahore, on higher pay.

One good came out of my removal from the Mission College. The Rawalpindi Arya Samaj people had long since under their consideration the idea of starting a High School of their own. The rustication of a Bengali student and the imposition of heavy fines on others, including the withdrawal of the stipend of Sant Singh, now Bhai Jodh Singh, M.A., for attending the meeting held in my honour, coupled with the fear that Sanskrit classes might be dismissed in consequence of my removal from the Mission College, gave them an excuse for immediately starting a D.A.-V. High

School in the premises of their Mandir.\* My pupil and friend, Professor Hukam Chand Kumar, B.A., of Fateh Jang, in the Attock district, was placed in charge of the venture. The population of Rawalpindi mostly consisted of Hindus. They had now an institution of their own, to cater for their boys, under the control of a devoted band of workers. And I am glad to have lived long enough to see it raised to the status of a full degree college.

I had given a solemn undertaking to my friends of the Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund not to start any agitation and to devote all my energies to the betterment of the Fund, but unfortunately for me an occasion soon arose to throw me headlong into a heated controversy with the Arya Samaj. Bawa Chhajju Singh and Bawa Arjan Singh were two brothers. The former was in charge of the *Arya Messenger*, the English organ of the Arya Samaj (College Section), and the latter of the *Arya Patrika* of the Arya Samaj, Wachhowali, Gurukul Section. Both of them were apostates from Sikhism and were carrying on a virulent propaganda against the pioneers of Sikh renaissance. The elder one seemed to be well-versed in Sikh scriptures, but his perverted mind and his literary ability, which was not of a mean order, he employed in his effort to show that the holy Sikh Gurus were only Hindu reformers, that they were believers in the Vedas and the Sikh scriptures were only mutilated copies of the Vedas and the other books on the philosophy of the Hindu religion. The younger brother was an amiable, open-hearted man in the grip of the fell disease, tuberculosis of the lungs, just the sort of a person who would like to live in peace and let others live in peace likewise, but his elder brother's sinister influence led him at times to play as a second

\* The D.A.-V. High School was founded on 19th March, 1899. Prominent among its founders were Lala Hari Ram Sethi, Hans Raj Sawhney, Gopi Chand Kapoor, Gurdas Ram Sawhney and Hari Ram. It was managed by the Dayananda Educational Mission Society, Rawalpindi. It was one of the prosperous schools of the town with thirty Sections, and, according to the Headmaster's letter of December 5, 1941, it had 1020 students on its rolls on that day.—G.      •\*

fiddle to him. My enthusiasm for the Sikh Gurus filled me with indignation at this misrepresentation of their sacred mission.

I approached my friend, Bhai Jawahir Singh, Honorary Secretary of the Khalsa College Amritsar Council, and broached to him the idea of having an English organ of our own. My idea was approved. Thus the first Sikh English organ, the *Khalsa*, was started on the 5th of January, 1899\*, on the auspicious *Gursaptami* day, with a donation of rupees five hundred from Colonel Diwan Jeewan Singh, Finance Minister of Patiala, from his private purse in response to my request for financial aid. Subscriptions began to pour in, and I was able to run on the concern for a little over two years. With a weekly journal in English entirely in my own hands, I now set myself to the task of the exposition of Sikh scriptures with the particular aim of giving prominence to the view that the Sikh dispensation was an independent entity and not a subsidiary system, based on Hindu philosophy, as our opponents maintained, and that Guru Nanak and Guru Govind Singh themselves claimed that what they said and wrote was revealed to them by the divine being direct.! I took up the stray verses quoted by Bawa Chhajju Singh and, in a series of 21 articles, headed *The Gurus and the*

\* The first meeting to consider the ways and means for starting the *Khalsa* was held in the premises of the *Khalsa Akhbar*, Lahore, on the 4th December, 1898, with Gyani Dit Singh in chair. For the sake of convenience, Bhai Maya Singh, Manager Khalsa Press, was asked to lend his name as editor and publisher of the paper, although, in fact, it was to be edited by Bhagat Lakshman Singh who was the Secretary of the Committee of management. The paper rendered very valuable service to the Sikh community during its life of two years. But for financial difficulties it had to be stopped, *vide* proceedings of the Board of Directors dated 17th January, 1901. Twenty-eight years later the *Khalsa* was re-started by Bhagat Lakshman Singh on 17th January 1929. Its second life was longer by a year and a quarter, and when Bhagatji found it impossible to continue it himself, he transferred it, at my suggestion, to Sardar Bakhshish Singh. The last issue edited by Bhagatji was dated April 21, 1932.—G.

f Jaisi main ave khasam hi bani taisra karin gian ve Lalo. —Guru Nanak  
Kahon Prabhu So bhakh hon, kisuna kan rakh hon,  
Sri Aspan hirpa tumri kar main na hahio, sabh tohe bakhaneo.

—Guru Gobind Singh

*Vedas* \* I successfully challenged the contention of our adversaries and was able to defeat them on their own ground.

The practice with Bawa Chhajju Singh was to pick up isolated verses to create impression that the Gurus were believers in the Vedas. I was not a *Gyani* and I had no occasion to make a critical study of the Sikh scriptures, but something within me told me that Bawa Chhajju Singh could not be right and that I had only to find out the verses in their proper settings to be able to disprove his allegations. But how was I to know the *Rags* and pages wherein the stray verses occurred? I approached one English knowing Sikh, then another, and still another, to help me out of the tangle but there was none whose memory could be of any avail to me. Bhai Maya Singh, however, was helpful in a way. He introduced me to a blind *Gyani*, about sixty years old, Bhai Nihal Singh by name, who, he said, was just the sort of man I wanted. This man proved to be a wonder. He knew by heart the whole of the *Adi Granth* and whenever I wanted him to point out the passage wherein a particular verse occurred he would ask me to take up my volume of *Guru GraiAh Sahib*, turn so many pages and read out the context, when to my astonishment I found the verses in their true setting. And my heart was filled with joy when I found that the full hymn corroborated my belief that the holy Gurus did not believe in any book of the Hindus or Musalmans and that whenever they mentioned any one of them by name it was only to show that they all sang of the Father Almighty, the Common Creator of all peoples of the world. On another occasion *Gyani Nihal Singh* exhibited his marvellous retentive power. A verse had to be traced but he had forgotten to which Rag it belonged. To find this out he asked for four days' interval to refer to some one better informed. A couple of days after he returned smilingly and asked me to step aside. He then took the volume of *Granth Sahib* in his hands,

% This series of 21 articles continued for full eight months, beginning with Vol. 1, No. 28 of 12 July, 1899, and ending with Vol. II, No. 10 of 7 March 1900.—G. "

weighed it and turned pages after pages. At length he reached a page which he made me read. He made me turn a few more pages when, lo! the very first hymn that I read contained the line I was looking for! In vain I asked for the name of his informant. But the *Gyani*, for reasons known to him, would not disclose it. Evidently another jewel, a scholarly man of great piety, was living in retirement, unknown and uncared for, or he was so contented that he did not want to be known. In gratitude I presented the blind *Gyani* with a small purse containing only twentyfive rupees for the trouble he had taken in visiting me for days and days in this connection. The good man took up the amount, counted it, tied it in his turban and, having done so, he put off his shoes, offered *Ardas* and then left me telling me that such a big sum he had never received. I closed the door after him and began to cry. "Is this the price of a Sikh Divine of such a high order?" I said to myself, "Has Guru Nanak's word come to be rated at this worth?" But such was really the case.

*Gyani Sardul Singh*, of whom I have already made a mention in my account of Mr. Macauliffe's work for the Sikh community, was getting Rs. 40/- per mensem as a teacher in Mission Girls School, Amritsar. When at an anniversary of the Singh Sabha, Patiala, where I had gone in company with Bhai Jawahir Singh,\*

\* Bhai Jawahir Singh was the son of Bhai Atma Singh of Gujranwala and was born at Amritsar in 1859. After passing through a successful career, he entered the service of the Sind Punjab and Delhi Railway Accounts Department, in 1876. In January, 1880, he entered the Manager's Office, North Western Railway, and rose to be its Office Superintendent. He was one of the close associates of Swami Dayananda in the Punjab and was a prominent leader of the Arya Samaj on its establishment in 1877. He was the Secretary of the Arya Samaj and Vice-President of the Arya Paropkarini Sabha for five years, 1878-83. In 1883 he was one of the original promoters of D.A.-V. College, Lahore, and worked as Secretary of its Funds Collection Committee. But he was soon afterwards reclaimed to Sikhism by Sardar Bikrama Singh Ahluwalia of Jullundur, Sardar Sir Atar Singh of Bhadaur and Prof. Gurmukh Singh of the Oriental College, Lahore. In 1886 he claimed the

Secretary Khalsa College Council, I heard a highly learned discourse from Gyani Sardul Singh, I could not help standing up and giving expression to my regret that such a highly cultured and high-souled verteran's talents should not have been availed of by any Sikh Chief or public society.

In those very days at a meeting of the Khalsa College Council, held under the chairmanship of Sir William Rattigan, Bar-at-Law, in the premises of the Central Training College, if my memory does not fail me, I stood up to propose that funds be allotted for founding a chair of Divinity carrying Rs. 500 to 1500 as monthly salary. When the teachers of other subjects were so well paid, there was no reason why the teacher of religion in the College should not have means for better living. My remarks provoked jeers and laughter. "What a silly proposal this was! The mover had evidently taken leave of his senses." Such a fabulous sum to be

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position of the Head Granthi of the Darbar Sahib Amritsar, but his claim was not successful. He was actively opposed to the return of Maharaja Duleep Singh to the Punjab in 1886 owing to his enthusiastic loyalty to British Government. He was also against the participation of the Sikhs in the activities of the Indian National Congress.

Owing to the uncalled for attacks of Pt. Guru Dutt, M.A., on the Sikh Gurus on November 25, 1888, on the eleventh anniversary of the Arya Samaj, Bhai Jawahir Singh dissociated himself from the Arya Samaj and devoted the rest of his life to the cause of the Singh Sabha movement and of the education of the Sikhs. Working in collaboration with Sardar Sir Atar Singh, Prof. Gurmukh Singh and Bhagat Lakshman Singh, he was one of the original promoters of the Khalsa College Amritsar. He worked as Secretary of the Khalsa College from December 1892 to December 1906 when he made over the charge to Sardar, afterwards Sardar Bahadur Dr. Sir, Sundar Singh Majeethia. He was also a fellow of the Panjab University, an examiner of various Oriental examinations and a member of the Punjab Text Book Committee. For a number of years he was the Chief Secretary and Vice-President of the Khalsa Diwan, Lahore, established in 1883 and registered in 1892 under Act XXI of 1860. He wrote several books in Urdu and Panjabi on Sikh religious and social matters. He died on 14th May, 1910. Also see *Brief Note on Bhai Jawahir Singh* and its appendices.—G.

paid for a work which was being done for Rs. 30/- or 40/- per mensem ! Some voices shouted, "sit down, sit down." Only Sir William and a few other European members, who were accustomed to seeing their church-men well paid, seemed to appreciate my remarks. And as nobody supported my proposal, it was not taken up for consideration. Sir William, however, was good enough to assure me that when funds permitted the Council would be glad to give every consideration to a proposal of this sort. The reason why I suffered defeat in the Council was that I took the members by surprise. Had I taken the more intelligent among them into confidence, the fate of the proposal would have been different. I profited from this experience and never afterwards did I suffer a defeat in the Council meetings.

But I am digressing. The *Khalsa*, being the only English vehicle of Sikh opinion, brought me the acquaintance of a host of youngmen of Lahore colleges and public offices. Through them I carried on propaganda work in connection with the Singh Sabha movement. They began to feel a sense of the individuality of their creed and a dignity in belonging to it. Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha, who was then not known to me very much, issued a book in Gurmukhi under the title of *Ham Hindu Nahin*, containing scriptural texts in support of his contention. I preached the same idea through the *Khalsa*, but with this difference that while I claimed that the Khalsa church was a distinct divine dispensation, enjoining wearing distinct religious symbols and following distinct social customs, I never intendend to convey the idea that politically interests of the Khalsa ran counter to those of the Hindus or, for the matter of that, even to those of the Indian Musalmans or Christians. But despite my pronounced liberalism, the Arya Samajist organs treated me as an anti-Hindu, which I was not. My parents, brothers and cousins were all Hindus of the Sanatanist school of thought. Some of my relatives on father side held prominent positions in the Arya Samaj. But all this did not make me immune from violent attacks in Arya Samajist organs. To their youngmen, I was a sort of a bugbear. I remember how they pointed their fingers at me when they saw me on public roads or at public functions.

Secretary Khalsa College Council, I heard a highly learned discourse from Gyani Sardul Singh, I could not help standing up and giving expression to my regret that such a highly cultured and high-souled verteran's talents should not have been availed of by any Sikh Chief or public society.

In those very days at a meeting of the Khalsa College Council, held under the chairmanship of Sir William Rattigan, Bar-at-Law, in the premises of the Central Training College, if my memory does not fail me, I stood up to propose that funds be allotted for founding a chair of Divinity carrying Rs. 500 to 1500 as monthly salary. When the teachers of other subjects were so well paid, there was no reason why the teacher of religion in the College should not have means for better living. My remarks provoked jeers and laughter. "What a silly proposal this was! The mover had evidently taken leave of his senses." Such a fabulous sum to be

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position of the Head Granthi of the Darbar Sahib Amritsar, but his claim was not successful. He was actively opposed to the return of Maharaja Duleep Singh to the Punjab in 1886 owing to his enthusiastic loyalty to British Government. He was also against the participation of the Sikhs in the activities of the Indian National Congress.

Owing to the uncalled for attacks of Pt. Guru Dutt, M.A., on the Sikh Gurus on November 25, 1888, on the eleventh anniversary of the Arya Samaj, Bhai Jawahir Singh dissociated himself from the Arya Samaj and devoted the rest of his life to the cause of the Singh Sabha movement and of the education of the Sikhs. Working in collaboration with Sardar Sir Atar Singh, Prof. Gurmukh Singh and Bhagat Lakshman Singh, he was one of the original promoters of the Khalsa College Amritsar. He worked as Secretary of the Khalsa College from December 1892 to December 1906 when he made over the charge to Sardar, afterwards Sardar Bahadur Dr. Sir, Sundar Singh Majeethia. He was also a fellow of the Panjab University, an examiner of various Oriental examinations and a member of the Punjab Text Book Committee. For a number of years he was the Chief Secretary and Vice-President of the Khalsa Diwan, Lahore, established in 1883 and registered in 1892 under Act XXI of 1860. He wrote several books in Urdu and Panjabi on Sikh religious and social matters. He died on 14th May, 1910. Also see *Brief Note on Bhai Jawahir Singh* and its appendices.—G.

paid for a work which was being done for Rs. 30/- or 40/- per mensem ! Some voices shouted, "sit down, sit down." Only Sir William and a few other European members, who were accustomed to seeing their church-men well paid, seemed to appreciate my remarks. And as nobody supported my proposal, it was not taken up for consideration. Sir William, however, was good enough to assure me that when funds permitted the Council would be glad to give every consideration to a proposal of this sort. The reason why I suffered defeat in the Council was that I took the members by surprise. Had I taken the more intelligent among them into confidence, the fate of the proposal would have been different. I profited from this experience and never afterwards did I suffer a defeat in the Council meetings.

But I am digressing. The *Khalsa*, being the only English vehicle of Sikh opinion, brought me the acquaintance of a host of youngmen of Lahore colleges and public offices. Through them I carried on propaganda work in connection with the Singh Sabha movement. They began to feel a sense of the individuality of their creed and a dignity in belonging to it. Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha, who was then not known to me very much, issued a book in Gurmukhi under the title of *Ham Hindu Nahin*, containing scriptural texts in support of his contention. I preached the same idea through the *Khalsa*, but with this difference that while I claimed that the Khalsa church was a distinct divine dispensation, enjoining wearing distinct religious symbols and following distinct social customs, I never intended to convey the idea that politically interests of the Khalsa ran counter to those of the Hindus or, for the matter of that, even to those of the Indian Musalmans or Christians. But despite my pronounced liberalism, the Arya Samajist organs treated me as an anti-Hindu, which I was not. My parents, brothers and cousins were all Hindus of the Sanatanist school of thought. Some of my relatives on father side held prominent positions in the Arya Samaj. But all this did not make me immune from violent attacks in Arya Samajist organs. To their youngmen, I was a sort of a bugbear. I remember how they pointed their fingers at me when they saw me on public roads or at public functions.



One such man, who then wrote against me under a pseudonym, in the columns of the *Arya Gazette*, Lahore, now extinct, I believe, holds a prominent position under the Punjab Government. He described himself as a Sikh. But his knowledge of Sikhism has been throughout employed in misrepresenting Sikhs and Sikhism, though it has certainly stood him in good stead from the worldly point of view. But young people generally are pure-minded and open to conviction. Once a batch of them travelled with me from Lahore to Gujranwala. They cast on me furtive glances and one of them was bold enough to approach me and know my views. A few minutes talk changed his demeanour and when he alighted at Gujranwala, his destination, he had the goodness to warmly greet me and so did his companions.

## CHAPTER XLI

## KHALSA DIWAN LAHORE

## THE CHIEF KHALSA DIWAN AMRITSAR

My residence in Lahore naturally drew me closer to the Sikh workers immediately after I took over the charge of the office of Secretary to the Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund. I came to know then how precarious their condition was. They had not only ranged against them the whole Arya Samaj which by that time had become a power to count with but their own young men also intrigued against them.

My hold over the younger generation turned the tide of public opinion in their favour. They had now a press of their own and two weekly journals, the *Khalsa Akhbar* in Gurmukhi characters, and the *Khalsa* in English. Bhai Gurmukh Singh\* the

\*Bhai Gurmukh Singh was one of the leading organizers of the Singh Sabha movement. He was born at Kapurthala in April, 1849. His father Basawa Singh, a Chandhar Jat, of the village of Chandhar in the district of Gujranwala, was a cook in royal household there. As Basawa Singh was a great favourite of Kanwar Bikrama Singh Ahluwalia, a scholarly prince, the latter took personal interest in the education of his promising son, Gurmukh Singh, who, like the prince himself, had a religious bent of mind. Kanwar Bikrama Singh was one of the original three promoters of the first Singh Sabha established at Amritsar on Monday July 28, 1873 (Sawan 15, 1930 B.K.), the other two being Baba Khem Singh Bedi and Sardar Thakar Singh Sandhawalia. Finding, in 1876, that the Singh Sabha movement had not been able to maintain its original zeal and vigour for Sikh missionary

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actual leader of the Singh Sabha movement and the chief original promoter of the Khalsa College had died at Solan of heart failure. His mantle fell on Bhai Jawahir Singh, Secretary of the Khalsa College Council, who was a highly intellectual man, of a handsome physique and suavity of manner that, added to his hospitality, won him the unstinted admiration and regard of his compatriots, particularly of the majority of the members of the Lahore Khalsa Diwan and the Khalsa College Council. Bhai Dit Singh Gyani wielded a powerful pen and was a literary giant. Bhai Maya Singh was a man of high character and had a great organizing power

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work, Bhai Gurmukh Singh came into the field and revitalized its activities. The development of Panjabi language and literature and the advancement of education and propagation of Sikh religion were the main objects of the movement to which Gurmukh Singh devoted his energies. When the teaching of Panjabi was introduced in 1877 in the Oriental College, Lahore (established in 1876), he was appointed a Professor. During his service at Lahore, he made a beginning in Panjabi journalism and started, one after the other, the *Gurmukhi Akhbar* (1880), the *Vidyirah* (1880), the *Khalsa* (1885), the *Sudharak* (1886) and the *Khalsa Gazette* (1886).

On November 12, 1879, the Singh Sabha, Lahore, was established, and in the following year a Panjabi school was started there. In 1883 (on April 11) was established the Khalsa Diwan Lahore, which soon had its own press and started a vigorous campaign for social reforms and removal of untouchability, inviting the depressed classes to the Sikh fold.

As a result of the hostile attitude of the Arya Samajist leaders towards Sikhs and Sikhism exhibited in the eleventh annual meeting of the Arya Samaj at Lahore on November 25, 1883, the Sikh members, including Bhai Jawahir Singh, who had been the Secretary of the Arya Samaj and of the Funds Collection Committee of D.A.-V. College, and Bhai Dit Singh Gyani left the Samaj for good and joined the Singh Sabha movement. They were most helpful to it through press and platform. With the help of some of his European friends and Bhai Jawahir Singh and Bhai Dit Singh, Bhai Gurmukh Singh launched the scheme of the establishment of Khalsa College which took practical shape on March 5, 1892, when its foundation stone was laid by Sir James B. Lyall, then Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab. Bhai Gurmukh Singh died in harness on November 24, 1898, at Kandaghat where he had gone to see the Maharaja of Dhaulpur for donation for the Khalsa College, Amritsar.—G. ->

and, what is more, a gift of the gab to a remarkable degree. I know how high was the esteem in which all these men had been held in the Arya Samaj and what they had lost by joining the Singh Sabha movement. Their selfless work was not only not recognized but their honesty was also impugned by not a small section of the people outside their limited circle of friends. To uphold them and defend them against attack from all quarters, I made my religious duty. Their strength was my strength and my strength was theirs. All opposition died away. The small batch of Amritsar members in the Khalsa College Council was held at bay. They were a poor lot. Their only spokesman was Sardar Tarlochan Singh, M.A., Vakil, Managing Director, Punjab and Sind Bank, then a mere callow youth. And I remember how from my seat in the Council I subjected his meanings and me wings to a slashing criticism and how the Amritsar *Junto* suffered defeat every time it charged.

It was in those triumphant days of my public career that I approached my Professor, Mr. William Bell, M.A., CLE., Director, Public Instruction, Punjab, with a request to sound the then Lieutenant-Governor Sir Macworth Young, and let me know if His Honour would reconsider the question of the location of the Khalsa College at Lahore. The reply, verbally given, was in the affirmative. I was given to understand that if the majority of the Sikh community wanted the change the Government saw no reason why it should interfere. I jumped with delight. But when a signed memorial to this effect was printed and was about to be despatched, a telegram from Mr. Bell was received saying that His Honour was not prepared to see the question re-opened. What had led the government to change its mind I never knew exactly. My surmise was that some leading man or men in my own party had been busy in thwarting my efforts, lest his or their leadership might be jeopardized under the dominant official bloc in the Council, in case the College was located at Lahore. And this suspicion grew stronger when at a meeting of the Council held in the Hall of the Government College, Lahore, under the chairmanship of Sardar Bhagat Singh, Prime Minister of the Kapurthala State, I formally proposed that the

College Depaitment should be removed to Lahore, the nerve centre of national life, and thus the wrong done in locating it at a place so remote might be undone. "What about a lac of rupees spent on the buildings ?" said a voice. "The buildings might be sold to the Military or any one else or an effort might be made to enlarge the school departments and if all this was not practicable they might be blown up. Any way for the sake of a lac of rupees the interests of the community should not be jeopardized for all time, was my reply. Sardar Har-Bhagat Singh from Ludhiana stood up from his seat to support me. My proposal, said he, was impracticable and unthinkable. He had heard of a machine made in America with which people there easily transported buildings from one place to another. Why not import such a machine from there and remove spare buildings to Lahore ? The Amritsar members got excited over it. Their friend, Sardar Dharam Singh of Gharjakh, Gujranwala, who was standing opposite to me on the other side of the table, got furious and blew hot and cold, but nobody would listen to him. All was noise and confusion, where-upon the chairman declared the meeting to be dissolved.

That was, if I mistake not, the last meeting of the Council that for years I attended. I had alienated the sympathies of the Amritsar party by my open opposition of them. Now I got offended at the behaviour of the leaders of the Lahore party, I mean Bhai Jawahir Singh and Bhai Maya Singh, and I never asked them why they had failed to stand by me in the aforesaid meeting. It was enough that they had kept silent. I avoided seeing them and cut off connection with the *Khalsa*. The control of the *Khalsa*, I transferred to a registered body comprising about 30 members residing in various stations in the province. But my sympathies were entirely with them. Outside their small circle there was not much of public life. For several decades they had worked for the uplift of the community at a tremendous sacrifice and in the teeth of an opposition under which hearts less brave would have quailed. They were men of humble means. They could not trace high lineage. But they were giants among men and what they achieved was with their own moral and intellectual

strength with which they were plentifully endowed. They were the founders of the Singh Sabha movement. Practically it began with them and died with them to all ends and purposes. Its soul departed with them, leaving its skelton behind. They were strangers to Lahore and left it as strangers without leaving any impress behind. The first to die was Bhai Dit Singh Gyani.\* He owed much to Bhai Jawahir Singh who was in fact his brains, his chief source of inspiration, to whom he clung fast, except during the last few months of this false world, when he wavered under the bewitching ways of his erstwhile opponents, who wanted to win him over and thus get into the good books of a host of his admirers. But he made amends for this passing defection of his life-long friend and leader by conveying to him his profound regards before he passed away. I never met him after I left Lahore in April, 1901. Neither do I remember having seen Bhai Jawahir Singh, thereafter, who, too, died (14 May, 1910) in harness not long after, holding his head erect and retaining to the last his dignity and grace for which he was so much loved and respected.

Bhai Maya Singh survived both of his friends. And when, through the intrigues of the rival party, his paper the *Khalsa Akhbar* failed and the press deteriorated, he was compelled to open a shop

\*Gyani Dit Singh, son of Bhai Ram Singh, a so-called depressed class man, was born in 1853 A.D. at Anandpur Kalaur in the Patiala State. Under the influence of Gulabdasi Saint Gurbakhsh Singh of Tioor, near Kharar, district Ambala, and Daya Singh of Lahore, he became a Gulabdasi Sadhu. At Lahore, he was persuaded to Arya Samajist views by Bhai Jawahir Singh, then Secretary of the Arya Samaj, but he was soon reclaimed to Sikhism by Prof. Gurmukh Singh of the Oriental College, Lahore. Bhai Dit Singh proved to be one of the chief supporters of Prof. Gurmukh Singh in almost all his schemes for the uplift of the Sikhs. He edited the *Khalsa Akhbar* from 1886 to 1901, with a short break, and played a conspicuous part in the religious and social reformation of the Sikhs in the closing years of the nineteenth century. He was a member of the Khalsa College Council, the Khalsa Diwan and the Sri Guru Singh Sabha, Lahore. He died on June 17, 1901.-G.

for the sale of Indian drugs. He contentedly passed his days without ever fawning upon any woman-born. A frail, thin man, and not ungainly in appearance, he had heaps of brains. And it is note-worthy to remark that he was not only conscious of this advantage over his colleagues in the Council and the Khalsa Diwan but also openly prided himself on this valuable possession and exhibited a ;cit of *hauteur* in his manner towards his well-to-do detractors. But to those who understood him and valued him, he was loving and confiding and simple like a child. He died in Lahore in oblivion, but happy and strong, like his two friends who had preceded him. The trio had faults, and who has not ? But they were jewels of the first water. It had fallen to their lot to work against tremendous edds and to face inconceivable difficulties, but their genius and determination enabled them in the long run to weather all storms and surmount all obstacles and they were able to win for the Sikhs once again name and fane in their own ccuntry and abroad.

One by one, the friends and colleagues of the Lahore workers, scattered throughout the province, passed away. Thus died the Lahore Khalsa Diwan. On its debris the Amritsar paity founded what they loved to call the Chief Khalsa Diwan. This party was advantageously placed in as much as it consisted mostly of men who were residents of the commercial city of Amritsar, bound by the ties of blood and friendship and community of interests.

## CHAPTER XLII

### KHALSA SCHOOLS IN SUKHO AND KALLAR ESTABLISHED

As stated in the foregoing pages, I had conceived the idea of linking the various towns and villages of Pothohar with a chain of Khalsa Primary schools in villages, Middle schools in Tehsil towns and a High school in the city of Rawalpindi. But the scheme was nipped in the bud as it were on the termination of my career in the Mission College, Rawalpindi. A little propaganda work had proved sufficient to throttle the Christian Mission High School, Gujarkhan, which, therefore, died of sheer inanition. The Sayyad Mission School was a huge hoax. The clever people who had made a cat's paw of the Mission people and had led them to seriously believe that they wanted a Christian school in the village soon turned their back on the Missionaries when their object had been gained. So there, too, the Missionaries had to stop work. I ought to have profited from the experience of the Christian Missionaries, who were so strongly backed and who had unlimited financial resources, and considered twice before launching my scheme, friendless and penniless as I was. Unfortunately, however, I was in those days suffering from Padriphobia and Arya-Samajphobia. My ailment was known. Men saw me at Lahore and told me that my class-fellow, Bhai Mahan Singh of Sukho, who was managing Lower

Primary School of his own in his village,\* was going to transfer it to the Christian Missionaries. I atonce fell into the trap and agreed to start a Khalsa Anglo-Vernacular Middle School there under the auspices of the Rawalpindi Khalsa Diwan which I had organized without giving thought as to where the funds were to come from and quite forgetful of the fact that opening an institution of such a big status in a small out of the way place, was against the programme I had chalked out for myself. All that I felt was that the aim was good and hoped that enough local support would be forthcoming and, even if it did not, the income from fees and grant-in-aid would be enough for all requirements. And if there was any deficit it would be met from contributions from the Khalsa Diwan Rawalpindi which, by the by, did not possess more than a few hundred rupees. But I was so full of enthusiasm and was so self-confident that at that time I never dreamed of failure. Every now and then I took train to Gujarkhan, shared the hospitality of my esteemed friend Sardar Sahib Sobha Singh, Sub-Assistant Surgeon, and hiring a pony trudged along the *kacha* road over a hilly and riverain tract, saw friends at Sukho, and returned early in the dawn. One night I remember I arrived at Gujarkhan at 9 o'clock in the night, reached Sukho at mid-night with a view to meeting my friend Sardar Mohan Singh, District Inspector of Schools, and enlist his sympathies in the matter of

\* The Angalo-Vernacular Primary School of Sukho was founded by Sardar Mahan Singh in 1894. It was raised to the standard of Middle School in 1896 and was recognized as such in 1898. This was the stage of the school to which Bhagat Sahib refers in the text. The School was run by him for some four years as its manager on behalf of the Khalsa Diwan Rawalpindi with Bhai Mahan Singh as Assistant Manager. To make it financially more stable, Bhagat Lakshman Singh offered in June 1902 to affiliate it, and also the Khalsa School at Kallar, to the Khalsa College Amritsar, but as, for paucity of funds, the College Council could make no money grant to them, the application for affiliation was withdrawn (H. A. B. Rattigan to Bhagat Lakshman Singh, dated 17 June, 1902; Proceedings of the Managing Committee of Khalsa College Amritsar, 30 October, 1902). —G.

my application for grant-in-aid ; but finding that he had gone to Banda, some 8 miles off, I atonce proceeded to that village, accompanied by Bhai Mahan Singh, the worthy manager of the Sukho School, and also, I think, by my friend Buddha Singh, B.A., secondmaster. He (Bhai Mahan Singh) very kindly promised his support. From there we proceeded to Daulatala to see Chaudhri Narain Singh Risaldar, a member of the District Board, and ask him to be good enough to attend the District Board meeting the following day and interview the Deputy Commissioner, Colonel Egerton, who was known to him as they had both served in one and the same Cavalry. It was about 3 a.m. The night was wintry. The good Chaudhri Sahib served us with hot tea. As milk could not be had at that time he mixed butter with tea. O ! how we enjoyed that tea ! The remembrance of it warms me up even now, cold though I am under the freezing weight of three score years and ten. How kind of Chaudhri Narain Singh to have agreed to our request ! Although he was suffering from a severe attack of gout, he took a palanquin and reached Rawalpindi in time to do the needful.

How good those times were and how good men were those days ! My father was District Board Accountant, the oldest hand in the District Kutchery and District Board establishment. The Secretary, Mr. Sullivan, a jolly good old Irishman, and his Reader, Munshi Ram Chand, a Khatri of Pindigheb, who looked upon the Singh Sabha propaganda as an heretic innovation, though both kind to me, pleaded their inability to entertain my application for paucity of funds. "Remember," said I, confronting them, "who the applicant is." The argument proved incontrovertible and the Sukho Khalsa School was placed on the list of Aided institutions hardly before it had completed its first year of life. This argument proved equally powerful when, a year after, I approached the District Board with a similar application in aid of the Khalsa Anglo-Vernacular Middle School, Kallar, in Kahuta Tehsil, which under a fit of Arya-Samajphobia, provoked by an idle gossip that the Rawalpindi Arya Samajists were preparing to start an Arya school there, I had taken under my charge. The fact really was that the

Khatri Sikhs of Kallar were at daggers drawn with Baba, now Raja Sir, Gurbakhsh Singh Bedi, the eldest son of Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi, and Honorary Civil Judge, of whose unbounded influence and authority they were very jealous. And they thought that if their sons received higher education and got high offices under Government they would be able to hold their own against their all-powerful local overlord. Baba Gurbakhsh Singh was my class-fellow and friend ever since I was a child and almost a foster brother for, when a babe of a year and a half, I had sucked his esteemed mother's milk. I forgot all this and openly allied myself with his enemies, for such indeed they were, under the belief that their cause was just and with rupees three hundred in the shape of a donation and the promise of a similar help next year I opened a Khalsa Anglo-Vernacular Middle School there. In vain Bhai Mahan Singh mildly protested against my taking such a hasty step. He wanted me to complete my work in connection with the Sukho Khalsa School before taking up further responsibilities. But my great faith in a good cause and in human integrity would not permit me to listen to a word of caution. I threw myself headlong into pecuniary difficulties which soon arose. The District Board with its permanent assured income had only two Anglo-Vernacular Middle Schools, one at Sagri and the other at Gujarkhan. I, too, a day labourer, getting only Rs. 85/- per mensem as salary from the Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund, Lahore, and having absolutely no other source of income, heavily involved in debt on account of the *Khalsa* which was being run at a loss and the hospitality which I had to extend to all and sundry to uphold my position as a leader, not a big but a very small one, had two Anglo-Vernacular Middle Schools to provide for. The Headmasters of the District Board Schools were paid Rs. 50/- per mensem each as salary. I employed trained graduates with Rs. 70/- per mensem as salary. The same was the case with the subordinate staff. I indignantly refused to accept rupees thirty offered as a contribution by the Sukho Sikh Chaudhris. Nearly three thousand rupees had been spent on the Sukho School by that time. My friends of Kallar also went back on their

promise of aid.

Some of my friends in Singh Sabha Rawalpindi, who were better placed, for they had a building and a platform of their own and greater prestige in consequence, out of mere pique started rival schools at Kahuta and Pindigheb to divert public attention from my work and, thus, thwart my efforts for the educational uplift of my people, Hindus, Sikhs and Mussulmans, for in both of my schools the largest number were Mussulman. Sikhs and Hindus came next.

But the Singh Sabha people had neither the head nor the heart to maintain these institutions, which, not unlike young babes, weaned off from their mothers' breasts, began to languish and wither, and they would have died before long, but for the public spirit of a small band of selfless workers, in both places, who took their control in their own hands and nursed and fed them with motherly devotion.

Once, I remember, hard pressed for want of money, I advertised an annual session of our Diwan in the Hall of the Sresht-Niti-Shala, founded by the late Rai Bahadur Sardar Boota Singh, Sardar (now Sardar Bahadur) Mehtab Singh, Bar-at-Law, who had only recently returned from England and the late Sardar Jai Singh, Advocate of Jhelum, had also been invited on the occasion. In response to my request the officer commanding the station permitted Sikh officers and men to attend the annual session of our Diwan to the accompaniment of a Military band. Hearing of this, the President of the Sabha, Chaudhri Gurmukh Singh Chadha, waylaid them and would not allow them to cross the bridge on the river Leh. They had only two alternatives; either to force their way forward with the Sardar lying prostrate on the road or to return. They chose the latter course. Sardar Gurmukh Singh was a brave, open-hearted sportsman who would not knowingly do anything mean. In this case his passions had been roused by two men, now Sardar Bahadurs, whom I had set on their legs and whom I had sought to advance in life, but who, when they saw that they had secured a safe footing on life's ladder, thought that the best thing that they could do was to pay me back for my

solicitude and labours in their behalf by injuring me and my work.

This was not the only thing that my friends had done to see that the annual session of our Diwan was a fiasco. They had announced a simultaneous meeting in the Gurdwara of the Singh Sabha and had written to the Superintendent of Police that I and men associated with me were gathering *badmashes* from outside with a view to taking possession of the Singh Sabha building or some other fibs of this sort. It was yet dawn. I was busy with supervising the carpetting of the School Hall where our meeting was to be held. Sardar Mehtab Singh was strolling outside on the road when a Musalman Sub-Inspector of Police accosted him and enquired where the rival organization of the Singh Sabha was going to meet. He said he had been deputed by the District Superintendent of Police to see that no undesirable person from outside created disturbance in the city. Sardar Mehtab Singh said that he was one of the visitors from outside and offered himself for arrest. Sardar Jai Singh, Advocate, Jhelum, who was standing close by also made some such observation. Rai Bahadur Boota Singh, C.I.E., one of the most influential men of the town, had arrived in the meantime, to invite the visitors from the mofussil to a dinner at his house. On learning how the matters stood the Police Officer retired, not without expressing his deep regret at the fatuity that should have led any man or a group of men to thwart efforts for the uplift of their own fellow-men. The good man took leave of me assuring me of his fullest sympathy. A short while after I had to visit the Kotwali to show my license for a revolver. The same officer was then in charge of the Police station. Noticing me in the compound, he ran out and warmly received me. His handsome countenance and charm of manner added to his apparent enthusisam for a good cause, rarely to be seen in a police official, touched a tender chord in my heart. Unfortunately, however, I never enquired his name or address or else he would have been now a source of such solace to me.

It is a strange world indeed. You make enemies of men whom you serve and for whom you sacrifice your home and

hearth and all that men hold dear, but, unasked for and unlooked for, the gates of a higher and unknown region are thrown open wherefrom men appear to serve you as your guardian angels and to make you feel that the life, you had hitherto regarded so dark and dismal, is converted as if by a magic wand into sunshine and joy. Without such men, be they Sikhs or Hindus, Muslims or Christians, Asiatics or Europeans, Africans or Americans, this world must be a veritable hell indeed.

The proceedings of the Diwan terminated without any untoward incident. No appeal for funds was, however, made for the audience mostly consisted of our own school masters and school boys and a few sympathisers who had already contributed their widow's mite for the upkeep of our institutions. Where was requisite money to come from ? The Singh Sabha was in opposition. Bawa Sir Khem Singh Bedi's influence was working against our cause due to the foolish behaviour of the preacher whom I had engaged and who began to gad about the district making provoking speeches against Bawa Sahib, despite my express instructions to the contrary in this behalf. This resulted in the establishment of a rival school in Sukho, under the name of Sanatan Khalsa School Sukho with Chaudhri Attar Singh, brother of Bedi Sahib's third wife, as its manager. For this school Bedi Sahib donated a couple of thousand rupees, which amount soon rose to several thousands with the contributions of Rai Bahadur Sardar Sujan Singh, Malik Khazan Singh and other moneyed men in Rawalpindi to whom a hint from Bedi Sahib was a command. I had not even as many hundreds with me. This was a serious catastrophe. To cope with the situation the first thing that I attempted was to remove the root cause of the evil done. I atonce decided to dispense with the services of the preacher, but he proved a tartar to catch. It took me full one year to turn him out.

I also now thought of regaining my influence over Baba Sir Khem Singh and thus destroy powerful opposition. Such a course had already been suggested to me by my friend, the late Sardar Ganga Singh, Rais and Honorary Magistrate, Peshawar, father of my pupil Sardar Sahib Kirpal Singh, who had met me at my lodgings

in Lahore and told me how Baba Sahib bearing in mind how he had fondled me in his arms when I was a baby had rejected his son Avtar Singh's proposal for suing me for defamation for my articles on Babadom in the columns of the *Khalsa*. This had naturally mollified my feelings towards him. Hence when on his return from the Khalsa College, Amritsar, where he had gone as a member of the Sikh deputation that waited on the Viceroy, Lord Curzon, I saw him at the Lahore Railway Station platform, I ran to touch his feet. The light in his eyes had become dim, but recognizing me by my voice he observed, "Are you Nanaku?" remembering my name of my babyhood days, "who has been writing against me in newspapers?" "Yes, Sire," said I, "but how cruel of you to have helped in contributing thousands of rupees towards the funds of the worthless institution in opposition to the well-managed Khalsa School, Sukho, started by me, a penniless man, forgetting what I have been to you all my life? Need I tell you, Sire, how I relied on your powerful support in the furtherance of my scheme for the educational advancement of the people, 90 per cent of whom are your own disciples and what a sad tragedy it is that your protecting hand instead of blessing me actually smites me? Need I tell you also that the unfair competition of your brother-in-law, Chaudhri Attar Singh, has involved me personally into a heavy debt and that not a week passes when I receive registered notices from the Punjab National Bank people calling on me to liquidate my debts, or be prepared for being hauled up before a Court of Insolvency? Can you have the heart to see me reduced to such straits?" Tears trickled down the face of the old holy man and he hugged me to his breast. Not a penny thereafter went to the coffers of the management of the rival school.

It would also be, I believe, not out of place to mention here Sardar Sahib Bhai Mohan Singh's zeal for Panthic weal. He and I both were members of the Managing Committee of the Khalsa College and, as such, we had been invited to have the honour of being presented to His Excellency Lord Curzon. He preferred to deny himself this unique honour and responded to my invitation to utilize the Baisakhi holiday in proceeding to Sukho to inspect the

Khalsa School there and favour me with his suggestions for its improvement. He was then District Inspector of Schools, Ferozepur. He proceeded straight to Sukho and returned to duty the following day without halting at Gujranwala to see his aged parents and wife and it is for meeting this good friend at the station that I, too, had to forego the honour of presentation to Lord Curzon.

My leisure hours were now more usefully employed in writing in the columns of the *Khalsa* a series of considered articles on such subjects as 'Sikhism, a baptizing creed,' 'Wanted a Khalsa Church' and on other kindred topics. In the *Khalsa* I also contributed a few articles of historical importance, dealing with the questions as to whether the Sikhs were Hindus. This issue was raised in an appeal that had come before the High Court Tribunal, consisting of Justices Reid and Chatterji.



## CHAPTER XLIII

DAYAL SINGH WILL CASE  
WACHHOWALI ARYA SAMAJ RUNS AMUCK

It was contested on behalf of Sardarni Dyal Singh and her cousin Sardar Gajindra Singh that the Sardar was a Sikh and as such the Hindu law of inheritance under which Sardar Dyal Singh had alienated his ancestral property in favour of the trustees of the Dyal Singh Trust could not hold good. The High Court decided in favour of the trustees. The judgment was so faulty and the arguments of the learned judges so frivolous that I was easily able to invite public ridicule on it. My first article was reproduced in full by the Lahore Anglo-Indian daily, the *Civil and Military Gazette*. The Allahabad Anglo-Indian daily, the *Pioneer*, also simultaneously published my article on the receipt of its Lahore correspondent's telegraphic report. This greatly helped in inviting attention to my view point. My prophecy that there could be no finality in human judgment and that before long what the Privy Council had decided to be the correct view would be differently interpreted by its successors or by any other competent authority, proved to be true. In 1907, i.e., after seven years of the High Court and the Privy Council's decisions, the Anand Marriage Act, legalizing Sikh Marriage rites, was carried through the Imperial Legislative Council with the help of no less a personage than Sir Louis Dane, Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. About a decade after the Sikhs were recognized as an independent entity in the Government of India Act in pursuance of Minto-Montagu Reform Scheme.

As stated elsewhere, on my arrival at Lahore and settlement there as Secretary, Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund,

it occurred to me for the first time that the inculcation of belief in the infallibility of the Vedas, started from whatever motives, political, social or even religious, was a disservice to the cause of nationalism, was tantamount to a veritable attempt to disseminate Semitic beliefs in the land of the Aryan Rishis, the dethronement of the Aryan gods, and the enthronement of a jealous partial God, who had set apart lands of milk and honey for His own chosen people and had externally banned the rest of humanity to perdition (*Genesis, Old Testament*). What the Vedas taught I never knew and do not know much even now. Different scholars have different opinions about them. But this is admitted on all hands that Aryan culture was the outcome of the collaboration of countless Rishis, extending over countless years, a culture that admitted full freedom of thought and action and allowed the existence, side by side, of people of innumerable faiths. And when the protagonists of this Neo-Hinduism became so bold as to actually proclaim that the Sikh Gurus were believers in the Vedas, my indignation knew no bounds, for to my mind the holy Sikh Gurus were independently inspired agents. To hold that at one particular time the Creator of the Universe communicated His ideas on religion to a few chosen favourites and then became mum for all time is a preposterous assumption, nay, an unbelief in the Creator's Omniscience and Beneficence, a tacit admission that the common father of all mankind has a warm corner in His heart for a particular individual or individuals and ignores His innumerable offspring who all look up to Him for light and guidance and for sustenance. It must be apparent to any one who can think and reason that all religious dispensations are more or less efforts on the part of their founders to present to the believers a synthetic portrait of Truth as it suggested itself to them, and in proportion as these respective systems serve to satisfy human craving for religious solace they live and endure. When, for some reason or other, these dispensations cease to function properly, errors creep in, culminating eventually in the complete occultation of the main spring of life and light. But the light is there. It requires some master-intellect to develop and rediscover

the fount. The Great Guru Nanak's was this master mind which dissipated the mist and let the light of truth shine in full refulgence.

Holding such views about the catholicity of Baba Nanak's teachings and those of his nine holy successors,\* it was impossible for me to believe that they, the Gurus, contemplated a cleavage in the ranks of the Hindu society. On the contrary it was for the awakening of the Hindu mind and for the general uplift of the great Hindu community that the Gurus lived and died. Guru Govind Singh, indeed, pridefully remembers how his noble father, Guru Tegh Bahadur, gave his life to preserve the *Tilak* and *Yagyopawit* of the Hindus. And following in the wake of the Gurus, the Khalsa have ever thereafter risked their all, even their lives, in defence of the Hindus and their hearths and homes. Before Swami Dayananda Saraswatif, all that was good and noble

* Guru Nanak	1469-1539	Guru Hargobind	1606-1644
Guru Angad	1539-1552	Guru Har Rai	1644-1661
Guru Amarclas	1552-1574	Guru Har Krishan	1661-1664
Guru Ram Das	1574-1581	Guru Tegh Bahadur	1664-1675
Guru Arjun	1581-1606	Guru Govind Singh	1675-1708

f Swami Dayananda, the founder of the Arya Samaj, was born in Morvi State in Kathiawar, Gujrat, in 1881 B.K., 1824 A.D. He was a Brahmin by caste. He received his elementary education at home but his rebellious spirit drove him away from home at the age of twentyone. After a good deal of wandering, he found at Mathura a preceptor in a blind Sannyasi recluse Vrijananda at whose feet he completed his education and set out as a preacher. His interpretations of the Vedic hymns were not always accepted by competent scholars, and he was not, therefore, very successful in his mission at Benares and other recognized centres of Sanskrit learning. His harsh and offensive language towards those who happened not to agree with his views soon made him unpopular. He was, however, eminently successful in the Punjab where, on the anti-idolatrous ground prepared by the Sikhs, he could easily plant his standard with the help of the Sikhs who had invited him to the province and had arranged for his lectures and discourses in large gatherings in Sikh Gurdwaras and other public places. A large number of Sikhs supported the Arya Samaj in its establishment in 1877 and nourished it in its

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in the Hindus loved to recognize and express their indebtedness to the Khalsa. It is the Neo-Hindus, the followers of Swami Dayananda, who are responsible for stirring bad blood between the Khalsa and the Hindus. And what is strange is they not only do not see their error but they are also deaf to all reason. Granting that their contention is right that the Sikh Gurus believed in the Vedas and the Sikhs are Hindus, they should have no hesitation in joining the Sikh fold. They should rejoice that the Truth made known through the Vedas, according to them, thanks to the work of the holy Sikh Gurus, is being expounded through the vernacular of the province and is understood and acted upon by millions of people as was never the case before. But no, they must completely destroy the work of the Sikh Gurus, leaving not a vestige of it. They will have nothing but the Vedas, no matter if they are unintelligible to the mass of their people. They must have Hindi as their vernacular, to the exclusion of their own mother tongue.

A great propagandist of this fraternity, Bhai Permanand, when writing a history of the Punjab in Urdu, traces the progress of the Hindus from times long ago and forgotten and ends it at the advent of Guru Govind Singh, the tenth Guru of the Sikhs. According to him what the tenth guru achieved, what the Khalsa, Guru Govind Singh's baptized Sikhs, later achieved was something un-Hindu, if not anti-Hindu, something to be discarded, something to be tabooed, nick-named as Separatism and boycotted. It is, therefore, not strange if some wiseacres from among this fraternity, some of them even strutting under such dignified names as Uni-

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infancy. But the hostile attitude of Pandit Guru Datt, Pandit Lekh Ram and some other Arya Samajists against the Sikh Gurus exhibited in the eleventh annual session of the Arya Samaj on November 25, 1888, disillusioned the Sikhs and they left the Samaj for good.

For the early life of Swami Dayananda, see his *Autobiography* published in the *Theosophist* in 1879-1882. This was later on translated into Urdu by Lala Dalpat Rai. The Swami died at Ajmer on Kartik Amawas. 1940 B.K.; 1883 A.D. also see Lajpat Rai, *Arya Samaj*; Diwan Chand, *Arya Samaj*; Bahadur Mall, *Swami Dayananda*; Munshi Ram and Ramdev, *Arya Samaj and its Detractors*, etc.—G.

versity Lecturers and History Research Scholars, should proclaim the great discovery that the Separatist (Singh Sabha) movement amongst the Sikhs dates from the time when Mr. Macauliffe\* appeared on the scene and observed in a discourse (inadvertently, I believe,) that beef-eating was not forbidden in the Sikh scriptures. Of course, it is immaterial if the Sikhs should have dissociated themselves with one voice from Mr. Macauliffe in this opinion. Of course, it is nothing if Mr. Macauliffe started as a Sikh Research Scholar and died as a Sikh, boycotted by the members of his own service and race. He was an accursed thing. Of course, it is nothing if Hindu Councillors and Ministers should dine in English hotels, where beef is the principal article of diet served, and consider it an honour

\* Max Arthur Macauliffe, the learned author of *The Sikh Religion, Its Gurus, Sacred Writings and Authors*, was of Irish descent and was born on 29th September, 1837. He received his education at New Castle School, Limerick, Springfield College, and Queen's College, Galway, and was appointed to the Indian Civil Service after the examination of 1862. He was posted to the Punjab and arrived here in 1864. He reached the grade of Deputy Commissioner in 1882 and became a Divisional Judge two years later. He was attracted to the study of Sikhism and its literature by Prof. Gurmukh Singh of the Oriental College, Lahore, and he published a series of articles on the subject in the *Calcutta Review* during 1880-81. In 1883 he borrowed the services of Bhai, afterwards Sardar Bahadur, Kahan Singh for two years from His Highness Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha for the study of *Guru Granth Sahib*. As the translation of the *Adi Granth* by Dr. Ernest Truemp, a German Missionary, commissioned by the India office, London, published in 1878, was found to be full of imperfections, besides offending Sikh susceptibilities in many particulars, Mr. Macauliffe resolved to undertake the preparation of new translation. He resigned his service in 1893 for this purpose and published his monumental work in six volumes in 1909. According to Mr. Macauliffe's estimate, he spent as much as two lacs of rupees on this work. The Government of Mr. Morley offered him a grant of Rs. 5000/- which he refused to accept. Towards the end of his life, Mr. Macauliffe turned a Sikh and always recited Japji for his morning prayer. He died at his house, Sinclair Gardens, West Kensington, London, on 15th of March 1913. Besides the *Sikh Religion* and a number of articles and papers, his *Holy Writings of the Sikhs*, Allahabad, 1900, and *How the Sikhs Became a Militant People*, Paris, 1905, deserve special mention.—G.

to sit at the same table with British Governors and Viceroy in this country or British noblemen and Cabinet Ministers in England. They are all Hindus still. But Guru Govind Singh's Sikhs, even though not beef-eaters, but beef-haters, even though strict vegetarians, are anti-Hindu, at least something distinct from Hindus, so much so that all Sikh efforts even for the uplift of the so-called untouchables should be opposed. Even such a distinguished and public-spirited and sacrificing Hindu as Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, the founder of the Hindu University, Benares, who during the days of the Akali agitation publicly declared at Amritsar that each Hindu hom3 should contribute at least one Sikh for the defence of Mother Bharat, has not found difficult to change front and condemn the Monje-Ambedkar pact, according to which it was conceded with tacit consent that the untouchables might become Sikhs if they chose to leave the Hindu fold. Even Mahatma Gandhi, the most popular Hindu of the present day (I am referring to the year 1936 A.D.), whom his admirers love to remember as second Christ, nay, even greater than Christ, advises his Harijans (untouchables) to wait for the grant of Harijan rights, till the hearts of the caste-Hindus undergo a change and they may offer the amenities asked for, may be till Domesday. But he would not wish them leave the Hindu fold and take Sikh baptism. Thousands of these Harijans have been converted to Christianity and Islam, but Mahatma Gandhi\* has never thought fit, for reasons best

\*Mahatma Mohandas Karam chand Gandhi, born October 2, 1869 ; educated at Rajkot and London ; started practice as a Barrister in South Africa, helped British Government in Boer war, Zulu rebellion and during the Great War ; led Indians in South Africa in Passive Resistance and was imprisoned ; set up practice in Bombay which he soon gave up ; started *Satayagrah* Movement, 1918 ; Non-co-operation Movement, 1920 ; helped in Khilafat agitation ; jailed 1922, released 1924 ; elected President Indian National Congress, 1925 ; inaugurated Civil Disobedience movement, 1930 ; attended Indian Round Table Conference, London, as sole representative of the Indian National Congress, 1931 ; jailed 1932 ; retired from Congress,

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known to him, to raise his voice in protest. From all this it is clear as day-light that a great majority of Hindus throughout India consider Sikhism as something distinct from Hinduism. It is, therefore, not understood wherein Sikh dissenters are to blame when Hindus of the eminence of Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya offer active opposition to Sikh propaganda of conversion or reclaiming the Hindu untouchables.

#### OPEN SHAVING OF SIKHS BY ARYA SAM A JISTS

Through the *Khalsa* I was able to check, may be for the time being, the *Shudhi* (conversion) activities of the Arya Samaj (Vegetarian Section) whose leader was Lala Munshi Ram, an enterprising Vakil of Jullundur. His connection by marriage with the well known rich family of Raizadas Bhagat Ram and Hans Raj and his own push and vigour soon won him a prominent position in the whole of the Doaba (districts of Jullundur and Hoshiarpur). The cultured or Meat-Eating section of the Arya Samaj had an English organ, the *Arya Messenger*, under the editorship of Bawa Chhajju Singh, and the *Arya Gazette*, in Urdu, under the editorship of Lala Hans Raj and Lala Lajpat Rai. It had a big institution under its control. Lala Munshi Ram's party, too, had its two organs, the *Regenerator of Arya Varta*, in English, under the editorship of Bawa Arjan Singh, and the *Sat-Dharm Parcharak*, in Urdu, under the editorship of Lala Munshi Ram. The want of an educational institution for the party was soon supplied by the genius of Lala Munshi Ram who started the Gurukul at Kangri (Hardwar). To ensure the success of this institution he gave up practice and made Kangri his headquarters. The first time when I saw him was at

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1935 ; started fresh Satyagraha, 1940 ; though not even an ordinary member technically, he was virtually the dictator of the Indian National Congress. It was mainly due to his efforts that India won her freedom in 1947 and he is popularly known as 'Father of the Nation.' Mahatma Gandhi was shot dead by one Nathuram Godse, a Hindu fanatic, on January 30, 1948, for his alleged partiality for Muslims and Pakistan.—G.

Lahore at a midnight meeting at the house of my cousin, Bhagat Ishwar Dass, M.A., when the final cleavage took place between the two sections of the Arya Samaj and when he so ably advocated the Plebeian cause, for he was actually the leader of the Plebeians, if I can be excused for using the expression among the Arya Samajists. The Patricians (the Meat Eater section) consisted of well-to-do pleaders, traders and bankers. Their leader was Rai Bahadur Lala Lai Chand, a prominent leader of the Lahore Bar. The meeting was really a trial of strength and though the attempt to oust Lala Hans Raj from his position" on the D.A.-V. College staff failed, Lala Munshi Ram's advocacy of the cause of his party wrested admiration even from his opponents. I predicted a distinguished career for him, though I never thought or dreamed that, as Swami Shradhananda, he would out-rival his rival and earn All-India fame, nay, even earn the crown of martyrdom at the hand of a Musalman assassin. My sympathies went to him, because he had identified himself with men whom want of power and influence had not altogether demoralized. There were, of course, men among this party who were mere fanatics, but as fanatics essentially and generally are a sincere lot, this defect, if indeed such it is, never appeared to me as something that carried a stigma with it. Little did I imagine that an occasion would arise when such a man's activities would clash with mine. But such was destined to be the case.

As I was sitting at my lodgings on the Ganpat Road, Lahore, Bhai Kanhaiya Singh, the well known coadjutor of Dr. Jai Singh of the defunct Shudhi Sabha, came to me and told me that some thirty Rahtia Sikhs (weavers by profession) had arrived and that the next morning they would be publicly shaved in the Arya Samaj, Wachhowali, before conversion to the Arya Samajist creed and that, if possible, they should be dissuaded from taking such a step. I accompanied Bhai Sahib to the place where these men were lodged. My old friends, Bhagat Remal Das Multani, a highly religious person, and Lala Kashi Ram Vaid, now Municipal Commissioner, whom I knew ever since he was a clerk in Military Accounts Office, Rawalpindi, welcomed us, and told us that we were free

to dissuade and take away as many of the men who cared to remain Sikhs. This was a very fair offer. Bhagat introduced me to two or three such men, the rest were out at that time. Bhai Kanhaiya Singh addressed them a few words of advice. Their leader, Nagina Singh, accosted him with the reply that if we could assure them that the Sikhs would inter-marry and inter-dine with them they would not even dream of going out of the Sikh fold. The demand was only in keeping with the promise made at the time of the *Pahul* (baptismal) ceremony which was honoured more by its breach than by observance. I had nothing to say. "Let us depart, Bhai Ji," said I, "We will meet this good man again when we are ourselves Sikhs in the real sense of the term." Saying this, I came out of the place thanking my friends of the Arya Samaj for their courtesy and kindness. Bhagat suggested that it would be good if we saw all these men next morning in the Samaj Mandir before their conversion and made another effort. Nothing could be fairer. We gratefully accepted the offer and took leave of the good Bhagat. The news had by this time spread like wild fire. Early next morning, when we went to the Wachhowali Samaj Mandir, it was full to the brim. Even the street outside was crowded. We were taken to a room upstairs where the Rahtia Sikhs were assembled. Their leader, Mr. Nagina Singh, an Accountant in some Government office, was also present there. Mr. Raushan Lai, Barrister-at-Law, President of the Samaj, and, if I remember right, Lala Kashi Ram Vaid were also there. Lala Tola Ram Multani, then Secretary of the Samaj, I think, looked at me scowlingly as I addressed the Rahtia gentlemen. I told them that the educated Sikhs deeply sympathized with them and would do all in their power to ameliorate their lot. When their spokesman interrupted me by demanding our support in the matter of their free admission into the Darbar Sahib, Amritsar, I said we would and could obtain them all privileges which were promised to them by Mahatma Munshi Ram's party, but just as the Mahatma and his party did not represent the orthodox Hindus and were unable to obtain them admission into the Sanatanist temples of Benares, we could not guarantee them full freedom in the matter of their admission

into the Harimandir, Amritsar, then the stronghold of the orthodox Hinduized Sikhs. I could guarantee them free intercourse with Sikh Vakils and Barristers, educated Sikh Rases and so forth, possibly higher in social status than the men whose protection they then sought. I appealed to them to twice consider the step they were going to take. They belonged to villages mostly peopled by Sikh zamindars, whose susceptibilities would be wounded if they offended them in this atrocious manner. My appeal fell on deaf ears. One old man's eyes were filled with tears, but the rest sat speechless and sullen. I do not remember if I requested my friends of the Arya Samaj not to provoke Sikh antipathy by shaving those misguided persons publicly. But the advisability of such a course ought to have suggested itself to them. At any rate, this was the view of scores of Sikh youngmen who were standing outside, armed with hockey sticks and other weapons, and were waiting for the result of our pourparlers with the leaders of the Arya Samaj. When this was made known they looked at the Mandir with blood-shot eyes and made for the door. Through the Guru's grace, however, my influence over them saved the situation.\* They listened to my entreaties and returned home after receiving an assurance that steps would be taken to prevent the repetition of such a grave insult to the feeling of the Sikhs in the very city which was the capital of the Sikh Empire only some fifty years

\* The fact that the Arya Samaj of Wachhowali, Lahore, had resolved to shave the heads and beards of some *Rahtia* Sikhs of Jullundur before their conversion to Arya Samaj came to be known on the last day of April, 1900. It was, however, in the meeting of the Samaj on Sunday, the 3rd June, 1900, when, at the time of initiation, 'they were seated on a pulpit and their heads were shaved by half a dozen barbers before hundreds of multitude that had assembled to witness the performance.' According to an eyewitness, 'the Sikhs of Lahore were all fire with rage at this insult done to their feelings in such a public fashion.' 'The great mass of the Hindus community was rudely shocked and we heard dozens of the Hindus, young and old, violently cursing the men who had dared to insult the race who had protected their mothers and daughters from nameless atrocities at the cost of their own lives and those of their nearest and dearest in this world.' The *Khalsa*, June 6, 1900, PP- 3 and 4.—G.

back. A handsome young Hindu graduate, Mohan Lai by name; perhaps the gentleman who is now a pleader in Kasur, met us farther off in the street and was heard loudly condemning what he called 'the insensate action of the Arya Samaj. Standing close by, *m* Hindu shopkeeper, about ninety years old or upwards, who had seen the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh and who knew and remembered what the Khalsa had done and suffered in protecting Hindu lives and honour, actually shed tears at the disgraceful behaviour of the descendants of those very Hindus. Inside Lahori Gate, H met Sardar Mehar Singh Chawala,\* a Director of the Punjab Hindu; Family Relief Fund and the head in Lahore of our rival Amritsar party.

I had heretofore avoided him. The exigencies of the neva situation compelled me to break the distressing news to him. He was greatly touched and thenceforward he effectively helped me in countering this phase of the Arya Samaj activities. My attitude; towards him changed and, thereafter, I felt for him an abiding]

\* S. Mehar Singh Chawala was born at Lahore in 1918 Bk., 1861 A.D. In his days he was known as a great Sikh philanthropist of wide sympathies.: He was a great supporter of L. Hiranand in preparing Gurmukhi types and printing of *Guru Granth Sahib* in different sizes. He was one of the chief helpers of Singh Sabha movement in the eighties of the last century and exerted his influence in favour of Bhai Gurmukh Singh, Chief Secretary, Khalsa Diwan, Lahore, in the furtherance of his scheme for the establishment of Khalsa College at Amritsar towards which he contributed Rs. 5,000/-. The Central Sikh Orphanage, Amritsar, also owes its existence to the scheme promoted by Mehar Singh who donated Rs. 2,000/- towards its buildings.) He was the founder of the Guru Govind Singh Boarding House for the Sikh students of the Lahore colleges and was the chief donor of the "Khalsa" Boarding House at Lahore. The S. B. S. Khalsa High School, Lahore, and Gurdwara Chhevin Padshahi, Muzang, owed large portions of their buildings; to the princely donations of S. Mehar Singh who, in addition to many other things, was mainly responsible for the building of Gurdwara Shahidganji Singhanian on the premises of the well known Shahidganj, Lahore.

He took keen interest in the educational advancement of the Sikhs and was elected Chairman of the Reception Committees of the Sikh Educational Conference in 1917 and 1926 and was its President in 1925. He died at the age of seventy-two in April 1933.—G.

regard. The same evening [Sunday, the 3rd June, 1900] there was a large gathering at the Janamasthan of Sri Guru Ram Das Ji, where the Singh Sabha held its weekly meetings. The morning happenings in the Arya Samaj Mandir were related and it was resolved that a special meeting should be held next evening in Bawali Sahib Gurdwara for a public protest against the conduct of the Arya Samaj and that a special committee of influential Sikhs be formed to take necessary measures for organizing *Parchar* work in this behalf. Before the meeting dispersed, a handsome young Rahtia, Partap Singh by name, who was one of those whom I had addressed in the morning at the Arya Samaj Mandir and who had escaped from there, offered to be baptized into the Khalsa faith. He was immediately administered *A mrita* and the audience joyfully received *Karah Parsad* from his hands. Later, when he met me at my place on invitation, he told me that it was Gyani Ditt Singh himself who had suggested that the Rahtia Sikhs would do well in joining the Arya Samaj, for that would rouse the anger of the Sikh community and it would then, according to the 10th Guru's word,\* come to their rescue. Whether what I was told was true I do not know, but I believed it implicitly and took Bhai Ditt Singh severely to task at our meeting at the house of Sardar Mehar Singh in this connection. The good fellow smilingly bore my onslaught, and, be it said to his credit, that he lent his support to our propaganda, although his friends Bhai Jawahir Singh and Maya Singh had, for reasons best known to them, kept themselves aloof from the agitation we were contemplating to start.

The committee which was established for this purpose under the name 'Khalsa Sudhar Sabha', with Sardar Mehar Singh as President, started work in right earnest. Under its auspices a public meeting was held in the Bawali Sahib Gurdwara. The whole compound was full consisting of Sikhs and Hindus of all shades of belief and all ranks in society. Even the roofs and balconies of the adjoining houses were full of spectators, all eagerly waiting for

something sensational. In the midst of silence which was maintained to the last, I stood up and said that the occasion was not for speeches but for mourning, mourning for the snapping asunder of the ties that had hitherto bound Hindus and Sikhs, and I said, by way of warning, that if men of light and lead in the ranks of the Arya Samaj did not mend their ways, they must be prepared for retaliatory measures from a community which knew how to punish. With these brief remarks, which could not have taken more than five minutes, the meeting was dissolved, the audience dispersing with the due solemnity, indicating by the gloom and sadness on their faces that they truly appraised the consequences of the ill-conceived move of the Wachhowali Arya Samajists. The Khalsa Sudhar Sabha published thousands of leaflets in Gurmukhi characters and broadcast them all over the province, particularly in the Jullundur and Hoshiarpur districts of the Doaba and the Lyallpur district, where the Arya Samaj was carrying on its operations, warning the Rahtia and other Sikhs of the depressed classes against the danger of becoming a prey to the machinations of the Arya Samajists, who had little or no influence over the Sikh zamindars, among whom the lot of the so-called depressed and untouchable Sikhs was cast, and telling them to call at the office of our Sabha at Lahore which would baptize them and grant them certificates, with copies of an appeal to all Sikhs to show to such baptized persons all possible consideration and allow them to fetch water from their village-wells and place similar other amenities at their disposal. A few batches of well-educated young-men, reading in Lahore colleges, or serving in the various Government offices, and who could perform Kirtan and recite Kathas, were also sent to tour in the affected villages, to address the congregations in the Gurdwaras and invite attention to the duties enjoined by the holy Gurus in respect of social service. Bhai Teja Singh of Mengan, in Chakwal Tehsil, an intelligent and resourceful man, who, afterwards, put in so much useful work for the Amritsar party in organizing the Chief Khalsa Diwan, was made first Sikh evangelist of the Jullundur and Hoshiarpur Doab, with headquarters at Bara Find in the Jullundur district. The work he did during

the three months of his stay there was creditable to him. He turned the tide of Arya Samaj conversions and sent batches after batches to Lahore to receive *Rahul*. Almost each and every such batch was invited to a dinner at my place wherein educated Sikhs of rank and position gladly joined, thus showing that the promise of fraternal treatment held out to these good people had not been made in vain.

On one such occasion Lala Mulkh Raj Bhalla, who was also invited, noticing that each of these poor villagers was served with fruit and cold drinks, in addition to ordinary meals, incidentally remarked that I was spoiling the tastes of these men as they were not accustomed to such dainties, an observation at which I laughed for occasional indulgence in such dainties, even far superior dietary, at the houses of great people had not spoiled me.

When talking of Lala Mulkh Raj, I am reminded of what he had told me when a few days previous he had met me in the Anarkali Bazar and when I asked him to honour me sometime by dining at my humble abode. He said he would gladly do so, but he had heard I had made it a business to preach beef-eating amongst the Sikhs to provide against their reversion to Hinduism. I simply laughed at this preposterous charge and marvelled at the credulity of a shrewd man, as he was, in putting faith in an allegation of this sort against a strict vegetarian like me who had not touched even goat-meat for the greater part of his life and even whose ancestors had never done so for generations past.

I suppose it was on such equally false reports that Lala Munshi Ram wrongly accused me in the course of a series of articles in the *Sat Dharm Pracharak* that my emissaries were going about the country preaching the burning of the houses of Arya Samajists and the carrying off their women and children. In fact what I had actually done personally was only to carry on propaganda work on behalf of the Khalsa Sudhar Sabha, Lahore, through the columns of the *Khalsa*. My article '*Danger Ahead*', in which I delineated the possible effect on the peace of the province if nothing was done to curb the Arya Samajist free-lancers had, of course, attracted attention. It was quoted in full by

the *Civil and Military Gazette* of Lahore and the *Pioneer* of Allahabad, Anglo-Indian dailies, and was thus widely read. The matters, however, came to a head when a deputation of the Jullundur Arya Samajists formally waited on their Deputy Commissioner and asked for Government protection in the case of the Sikh invasion of their homes and hearths. Whether it was on this representation to Government or of his own accord I am not aware, but I remember how in those days the Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, I forget his name, conveyed to me Government orders telling me that if a breach of peace occurred I would be held responsible. Personally the Deputy Commissioner told me that, as a Christian, his sympathies were with me, and for the matter of that with the Arya Samaj people also, for what was being attempted or done was for the amelioration of the lot of the depressed people in the villages; but as Chief Magistrate he did not want any disturbance in the city of Lahore or outside in the district. He was even pleased to give me a chit to a European Barrister who, said he, would go through the proofs of my journal during the days of the agitation, in which I was engaged. Such precautions were, however, not needed, for a few weeks after my connection with the Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund was cut off, owing to my refusal to support the preposterous proposal of Rai Sahib Bishen Dass, Senior Vice-President of the Fund, for appointing a nephew of his as Headmaster of the Khalsa Collegiate School, Amritsar, and remove Bhai Bagh Singh, the permanent incumbent, or reduce him to a subordinate position. I was indebted to Rai Sahib Bishen Dass for the position I held in the Hindu Family Relief Fund, for Lala Harkishan Lai had been able to secure the majority in my behalf through the help of Rai Sahib Bishen Dass, most of the Directors being Railway employees and were, thus, under his direct influence. But I found it difficult to be a party to a flagrant injustice of the sort he was seeking to make me responsible for.

## CHAPTER XLIV

### THE KHALSA CEASES PUBLICATION

#### MAHARAJA DALIP SINGH'S DAUGHTERS VISIT LAHORE

All thought of struggle with the Arya Samaj had, thus, to be suspended. The problem before me now was to see how to find wherewithals for a residence so that I might continue my literary work in Lahore. For this purpose I convened a meeting of my friends, who belonged to Lahore, Gujranwala and Ferozepur and who were mostly youngmen, whose career had yet to be made, to consider if they could place the *Khalsa* on a sound financial basis. They expressed their inability to help me. Till December 1900 I carried it on myself.\* But in January 1900 I had to leave Lahore and entrusted the charge of the journal to my friend, Rai Bahadur Kunj Bihari Thapar, who was a mere stop-gap. The journal had thus to cease publication in April 1901.

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\* This meeting was held at the house of Bhagat Lakshman Singh in Anarkali, Lahore, on 3rd September, 1900, with Sardar Narain Singh, M.A., LL.B., afterwards Vice-Principal of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, in chair. Among other things, it was unanimously carried that Bhagat Lakshman Singh's removal from the post of Secretary of the Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund having made his stay here uncertain, an allowance of Rs 40/- per mensem, exclusive of house rent, be allowed to Bhagat Lakshman Singh from 1st September, 1900, for four months to enable him to stay in Lahore and conduct the paper. In the last meeting! of the Board of Directors, '1 the *Khalsa* held on 17 February, 1900, Bhagatji's step in stopping publication of the paper for want of funds was confirmed as he 'refused receiving payment' of the subsistence allowance.—G.

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The friends associated with me in my work, though they failed in rendering me effective aid in the upkeep of the *Khalsa*, were able to advance the cause I had set my heart on, viz., for the educational advance of the community. With this aim they met at my place under the chairmanship of Sardar Tara Singh, B.A., LL.B., late Headmaster of the Khalsa Collegiate School, Amritsar, when it was resolved to convene an educational conference. It was, however, not vouchsafed to me to see the idea materialized during my stay at Lahore. The credit was theirs. They mostly belonged to Gujranwala. There the scheme was matured and given shape to with the influential support of my friend the late *Sardar Sahib* Gulab Singh, who had, by sheer dint of labour and a high sense of public duty, risen to the position of President, Municipal Committee, Gujranwala. As the Lahore Khalsa Diwan had practically ceased to function, the control of the movement fell naturally into the hands of the Amritsar party which has been carrying it on since then with remarkable success.

I should not close this chapter without what I consider one of the most pleasing experiences of my life. The office of the Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund, Lahore, was then located in a hired building on the Ganpat Road. The room set apart for the Secretary was a dark, low-roofed hole, which might have been intended or even used as a bath by the previous occupant of the building. Its only furniture were a small table and two chairs.

One hot and sultry day, as I was checking my figures with the help of the office Accountant, I was startled by a voice, "How do you do, Lakshman Singh?" To my unbounded joy I recognized in my visitor. Reverend J. Morrison, A. M., the ex-Principal of the Gordon Mission College, Rawalpindi. He had recently returned from leave and had been placed in charge of District work in Gujranwala. He must have enquired for me. He must have learnt all that had happened at Rawalpindi, resulting in the severance of my connection with the Gordon College, but with Christian forbearance he only remembered my devoted service during the tenure of my appointment under him and had come to show his abiding regard and love

for me. Later in the afternoon I saw him at the house of Dr. J.C.R. Ewing, Principal of the Forman Christian College, and presented him with a basket of fruit. He hesitated to accept it, still regarding me as if I were his subordinate. The good Dr. Ewing, however, saved the situation by at once picking up the fruit, inviting Mrs. Ewing, and humorously remarking, "Well, these dainties ought to be welcome to us at least. Bhagat Lakshman Singh's brothers were our pupils, whom we loved so much!" Mr. Morrison smilingly drew his chair near his worthy host and hostess and joined them in the treat. I parted with my patron with tears in my eyes. I have not met him since all my enquiries have failed to bring me news about him and about Reverend Mr. Thompson, his successor, under whom it was vouchsafed to me to work and earn distinction which was envied. Perhaps, they have been gathered to their fathers. But to me they are a living force, the memory whereof cheers me up in most dismal of my moments. It is associations such as these that have kept me abreast during all kinds of storms in the world of politics and have enabled me to look askance at all endeavours to divide man from man.

I cannot resist the temptation of narrating another incident of historic value. It was, perhaps, in 1902 or early in 1903 that a daughter or both the daughters of the late Maharaja Dalip Singh, son and successor of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Emperor of the Punjab, Jammu, Kashmere and the North Western Frontier Province, visited Lahore. Bhai Jawahir Singh, who had been invited one day to see the princess at the bungalow where they had been lodged, took me with him. Arriving there he left me in his hackney carriage on the road and went to report himself. Before he was admitted in, he accosted an old Musalman nobleman and exchanged a few words with him. When he returned half an hour after he seemed to have been deeply moved. "How grand and noble!" ejaculated Bhai Jawahir Singh, "the Faqir cried like a child, because he could not bear the sight of the grand-daughters of the illustrious benefactor of his family living as guests in the very capital of the Empire over which their father and the mighty grandfather had held

sway !"\*

That this Faqir family consists of men in whose veins loyalty to the person of the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh is truly ingrained is beyond question. I learnt from my friend the late Rai Bahadur Kunj Bihari Thapar that it was a distinguished scion of this family, *Khan Bahadur* Faqir Sayyed Qamr-ud-Din, who had told him in the midst of conversation that the stories about Maharani Jindan's being a mere concubine of the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh and of the legitimacy of Maharaja Dalip Singh and some of his other brothers were mere fibs, that his father was

\* Princess Bamba and Princess Sophia, daughters of Maharaja Duleep Singh, came to India in November 1902 for the Dehli Coronation of King Edward VII in December. In January, 1903, the two\* sisters came to Lahore and stayed in the Charing Cross Hotel, now known as the Falletie. Later, the third sister Princess Catherine also came here., Princess Sophia returned to England in August, 1903, and Princess Catherine in 1906. The eldest Princess Bamba, later, married Dr. Sutherland, Principal, Medical College, Lahore, now capital of West Pakistan. She died at Lahore on March 10, 1957, and lies buried there in the Christian Cemetery.

Duleep Singh, the youngest son (born. September 6, 1838) of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, became the Maharaja of the Punjab after the death of his brother Maharaja Sher Singh on September 15, 1843. He was deposed by the British after the second Anglo-Sikh War of 1848-49. He was removed to Fatehgarh (U.P.) where he was converted to Christianity. He went to England in 1854, and in 1864 married Bamba Ludwig Muller. He had three sons and three daughters. All of them have died issueless. The last to die was Princess Bamba Sutherland on March 10, 1957. The Maharaja himself died in Paris on October 22, 1893. After the death of his first wife, the Maharaja had also married Lady Ada < Douglas Wetherill, of whom very little is known.—G.

\*f The following note on this subject from the pen of Bhagatji in, the *Khalsa* of October 5, 1930, will be read with equal interest.

Rai Bahadur K(unj) B(ihari) Thapar, a distinguished citizen of Lahore, tells me that when he asked Khan Bahadur Faqir Qamar-ud-Din,

/Continued on the next page. "

in charge of the marriage ceremonies of Maharani Jindan who was the daughter of a great Sikh Sardar in Gujranwala district and that he himself, when a grown up lad, was a witness to the birth of Prince Dalip Singh, and Sir Lepel Griffin was absolutely wrong in giving credence in his *Ranjit Singh (Rulers of India)* series to the vile propaganda of Raja Dhyan Singh, Maharaja Ranjit Singh's Prime Minister, who was really intriguing to overthrow the rule of the Khalsa and setting up his son as King of the Punjab.\* It was merely through good luck that I learned of this noble man's name from his son Faqir Sayyad Jalal-ud-Din, retired E.A.C., the present head of the Faqir Family. Naturally Sayyad Jalal-ud-Din speaks enthusiastically of his illustrious father "the like of whom," says he (in his letter of May 21, 1934), "you very seldom come across in the world. The Almighty rest his soul in peace ! I am glad that I have inherited his love for mankind in general, the past Khalsa Rulers, may their souls too rest in peace ! and the Sikhs in particular to a great extent." Needless to say how I reciprocated their warmth of feeling. I have not yet had the privilege of meeting my esteemed correspondent. But I am sure it will be such a joy to pay

[ Continued from the last page.

son of Faqir Nur-ud-Din, who was in charge of Maharani Jindan's palace, what truth there was in the report given credence to by Sir Lepel Griffin that Maharaja Dalip Singh was not a legitimate son of Maharaja Ranjit Singh and that Jindan was not a wedded wife of the Maharaja, he cried out "*AslaghJ'far-Allah*, such a base lie ! Can ; calumny go further ? I attended Maharaja's marriage myself. Maharani Jindan was the daughter of a highly respectable Zamindar and a duly wedded wife. My father was present at the time of Prince Dalip Singh's birth and I was my father's attendant at that time. Evidently some evil gossip must have told the base lie to the *Sahib*." This Faqir Qamar-ud-Din was 18 years old at that time.

\* In support of the above regarding the intrigues and evil intention of the Dogra Raja Dhian Singh, the reader is referred to the *Memoirs of Alexander Gardner*, edited by the Major Hugh Pearse, Wm. Blackwood, Edinburgh and London, 1898.—G.

him a visit.\*

As for Sir Lepel Griffin himself, I think it would be well to put down here what I know of him. I happen to be a reader of newspapers ever since I was a boy. I remember how one day I read of his appointment as Lieutenant-Governor of the Panjab and how a day or so following I was surprised to read in the papers that this appointment had been cancelled. *Rai Bahadur* Kunj Bihari Thapar, who had for the most part of his life been in close touch with high government officials, told me a few months before his death, which took place in 1931, that Sir Lepel Griffin had been guilty of passing a keep as his wife and that once he had secured her interview with Lady Dufferin. When the attention of the Governor-General, Lord Dufferin, was drawn to this incident he took it as a gross personal insult and cabled to London threatening to resign in case Sir Lepel's appointment as Lieutenant-Governor was not cancelled. This one damning incident is enough to show what reliance can be placed on anything that this paragon of virtue may have had to say about men and things.

\* Since the above was written I read in the papers some months ago that this good man had passed away. I curse myself for having lost the splendid opportunity of meeting him at his mansions in the Bhati Gate which was close to my lodgings on the Lower Mall during this year. —BLS.

Faqir Sayyad Jalal-ud-Din died in 1938. For a detailed account of the family, see *Chiefs and Families of Note in the Punjab*, revised edition, 1940, vol. i. 294-307.—G.

## - CHAPTER XLV

### I FACE HARD TIMES

I had to face hard times once again. Having cleared my outstanding liabilities with a loan from Diwan Gowardhan Das of Lahore, uncle of my friend Ram Jawaya Mall Sethi, I left Lahore in December, 1900, when I accepted the offer of my friend Mr. Bulaqi Ram Shastri, Bar-at-Law, of Hifizabad, to work in connection with his Match Factory in his town. But his whole scheme proving a chimerical one, I found myself again at my home in Rawalpindi after about four months.

My work in connection with both the schools at Sukho and Kallar had suffered. Both were being run at a loss. The Khalsa Diwan school at Sukho was on grant-in-aid list. And now that I was again free I set my heart to see that the Kallar school was also placed on that list. For this purpose I was now better placed. Through the good offices of my esteemed friend, Lala Shiv Dayal, M.A., officiating Inspector of Schools, Rawalpindi Division, I got the Headmastership of the Shresht-Niti-Shala High School, Rawalpindi, my home, and was, thus, on my legs again. Through Lala Ji's help also I was able to get the Shresht-Niti School and also our school at Kallar placed on the list of Aided Institutions. Equally helpful he proved to me in the matter of the D.A.-V. High School. Rawalpindi, simultaneously, then under the control of my pupil and life-long friend. Professor Hukam Chand Kumar, B.A. The Shresht-Niti School, before I took charge of it, cost its proprietor something like seven hundred rupees per mensem, for it then charged no tuition fees. Under my control the expenditure was reduced to

something like Rs. 400/- per mensem, despite the fact that good many of the old teachers had been removed and new trained and certificated men had been engaged on higher salaries. All this seemed to be nothing to the worthy proprietor of the School, Rai Bahadur Sardar Buta Singh. He had so much taken to heart the removal of an old sychophant that one day he told me in all seriousness that he had felt as if his father was dead. I knew that the good man's father had died long ago and, as I had no heart to see him suffer this bereavement twice, I parted company with him and was at large again. When some days after, I visited Kallar I found the whole situation changed. The opponents of Raja Sir Gurbukhsh Singh Bedi had made up their differences with him and they did not see the need of a Khalsa School any longer. They now fought shy of me. One day as I was pondering over the situation in the school building, I was surprised to see a man invading my solitude with a message from Bedi Sahib enquiring when he might come and see me. I sent the man away telling him that I would go myself and see the Lord of the townlet, which I did. I was welcomed cordially. Not a word of complaint was uttered by Baba Sahib. But in my heart of hearts I felt how I had wronged him by having sided with his enemies, quite forgetting the personal ties that had bound me to him for over three decades. But Baba Sahib was so overwhelmingly kind that, in spite of myself, I agreed to live with him in his palatial residence for the rest of my sojourn and share his hospitality. To give a practical proof of his sympathy for my work and regard for me he called the men at whose pleadings I had undertaken to open the school at Kallar to his place and asked them to make good their promise to me bearing in mind the Immense good the institution was doing to them and the sacrifices I was making in its behalf. The result was a donation of Rs. 100/- by the men then and there and the renewal of the original promise. This amount sufficing for the arrears due to the Headmaster, I returned to Rawalpindi, but I had little faith in the Kallar people's ability or even desire to carry out their promise. Months passed but not a penny was received from them. The income from tuition fees and grant from the District Board was

large enough and a contribution of the small sum of rupees twenty per mensem was all that was required to keep up the school. But the people were so stingy or were possibly so poor that even this paltry amount could not be subscribed by them. It then struck me that the best thing to do was to transfer both the Sukho and the Kallar Schools to the Khalsa College Council. With this view, I wrote to the President of the Council, Mr. (afterwards Sir) Henry Rattigan, Chief Justice of the Punjab High Court. Simultaneously I requested Mr. William Bell, Director, Public Instruction, Punjab, to support my proposal. The Director wrote back saying that he had forwarded my representation to the President of the Managing Committee of the College and that I would do well by visiting him in this behalf and attending the next meeting of the Managing Committee at which the question would come up for consideration. What was my surprise when on arriving at Lahore I received a message from Mr. Rattigan requesting me not to attend the meeting,\* as he feared it would lead to unpleasantness. Evidently my friends of the Amritsar party, who had now the upper hand in the College management, had led Mr. Rattigan to conjure up bugbears and hobgoblins at the meeting in case I was present at it. I laughed at their pettishness. Even a little of imagination ought to have made them understand that the transfer of those schools to them was my defeat and their victory and consequent influence in Rawalpindi city and Pothohar. The question of want of funds could not arise, for Mr. Bell, then Under Secretary to Government,

\* It was in the beginning of June 1902 that Bhagat Lakshman Singh proposed to affiliate the Schools to the Khalsa College, Amritsar. Mr. Rattigan wrote to Bhagat Sahib on the 17th June, 1902, saying, "I have handed over your letter regarding the Anglo-Vernacular Schools at Sukho and Kallar to the Secretary to the Khalsa College Managing Committee (Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia) with a request that the matter might be brought before the Committee at its next meeting." 'the meeting referred to here and in the text was held on the 30th October, 1902, wherein it was made known that as the College Managing Committee could not, for paucity of funds, make any money-grant to the Schools, Bhagat Lakshman Singh had withdrawn his application for affiliation.—G.

would have granted them a subsidy if asked.

The only course now left for me was to transfer these schools to a new committee under the patronage of Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi,\* seeing that this would be a far better step than the closing thereof. Bawa Sahib with whom, as already stated, I had been reconciled, favoured the idea, but he wanted first to consult Rai Bahadur Sujan Singh, his chief disciple, and his own eldest son, Baba Gurbakhsh Singh. But before he could come to a decision, he passed away in his estate at Montgomery (11th April, 1905). As by this time I had become indebted to the Punjab National Bank, Rawalpindi, for over two thousand rupees, and I had no income of any kind and the interest on this loan, Rs. 12/- per cent per annum, was rapidly accumulating, I had no recourse left but to close the Kallar School and transfer its property, amounting to nearly a thousand rupees, to the Khalsa School at Sukho, instead of

•Baba Sir Khem Singh was one of the most prominent Sikhs of those days. He was the second son of Baba Attar Singh and a great grandson of Baba Sahib Singh Bedi, a great historic figure in the eighties and nineties of the eighteenth century and during the reign of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Born on 12 Phagan 1888 Bk., 21st February, 1832, Khem Singh was yet in his eighth year when his father Attar Singh died on 12 Maghar, 1896, 25th Nov., 1839. He remained inactive in 1849 when the Punjab was annexed by the East India Company. During the Mutiny of 1857-8, he rendered good service to British Government in the Montgomery district and was rewarded by the Government with Khillat of Rs. 3,000. He invariably exerted his influence in favour of the Government and was lavishly rewarded by them in various forms. He was quite a pioneer in the matter of female education in the province. He was appointed a magistrate of Montgomery in 1877 and an Honorary Munsif in the following year. In 1879 he was made C.I.E., and was later on nominated as an additional member of the Legislative Council of the Supreme Government. In 1898 he was made K.C.I.E. He is said to have been mostly responsible for the action of the Government in sending back Maharaja Duleep Singh from Aden to England in 1886. Baba Khem Singh was a supporter of the Khalsa Diwan Amritsar but he was not very popular with the Sikh puritans of the Lahore Khalsa Diwan who aimed at complete religious separation from the Hindus. He died at Montgomery on 29 (''haitra, 1962 Bk., 11th April, 1905. For a more detailed account of Baba Sir Khem Singh and his ancestors, see-Munshi Sant Singh's *Bayan-i-Khandan-i-Ucdian*, Urdu Ms., 1865; the *Punjab Chiefs*, etc.—G.

selling it to reduce my debts, however, partially. The Sukho school, I later transferred to a local Committee with Bhai Malum Singh\* as Manager with the proviso that I was to remain a liie-member of this Committee. I was never afterwards called or consulted except on one occasion and that too as a visitor. But I am grateful that my work there was not only not stopped, but was also carried out with marked success by the devoted Manager, Bhai Mahan Singh. When I left it the school had only 8 classes and some six or seven kanals of land, 4 of which were a free gift from my brother-in-law Sahib Singh and his elder brother Sardar Asa Singh. The remaining plot was acquired by purchase. With rupees one hundred in my pocket received from my uncle, Rai Sahib Sardar Sant Singh, I set out for Sukho to start building operations. The foundation stone was laid by Sardar Jawahir Singh of Daulatala, Retd. Sub-Judge, who together with his brother Sardar Hukam Singh contributed something like rupees seven hundred for the purpose. Sardar Amar Singh of Sukho, then Deputy Collector in Alwar State, also sent a donation of Rupees three hundred twice in aid of the school. These amounts really represent the donations received from Sukho and Daulatala. The remaining expenditure was borne by the Rawalpindi Khalsa Diwan, which existed only in name, the only subscriber being its President Sardar Gurmukh Singh Sahni, of my Mohalla, or by me personally from loans received from the Punjab National Bank.

One word about the Sanatan Khalsa School, Sukho. As already observed, it had an endowment of several thousand rupees collected through the influence of Baba Sir Khem Singh Bedi. The endowment money remained intact. The practice with the Management was to keep trained staff for the Inspection months

\* According to Sardar Sant Singh's letter of 11th June, 1935, his father Bhai Mahan Singh died on 17th March 1935.—G.

†The school was later on raised to high standard and was managed by a Committee of fifteen members.

According to letter No. 30 of 24th November, 1941, from the Head-master, the School had on that date the total strength of 560 students with "0 in the Secondary Department and 250 in the Primary Department—G.

and replace it by untrained men. The only permanent hand was the Headmaster, Bedi Kanhaiya Singh, a mere Matriculate. He was a local man and he contentedly stuck to his position for something like Rs. 20/- or Rs. 30/- per mensem. There was no uniformity in charging tuition fees. Duplicate registers of income and expenditure were kept, one set for showing to the Departmental Officers, containing bogus entries, and the other for daily use.

It seemed to both the friends and foes of the institution that it would go on till the end of eternity, considering how influentially it was backed. Cases of irregularities and *goolmol* in the matter of accounts were brought to the notice of educational authorities but no consideration was given to them. The Inspector, Dr. Stein, was truly a great man, but he was more an antiquarian than anything else and he, perhaps, thought it was no concern of his to investigate into matters of his own time. He took the allegations of Baba Avtar Singh, Sir Khem Singh Bedi's eldest son by his second wife, as gospel truth and told me in so many words that if he again heard any difficulty was placed in the matter of grant of leaving certificates to boys wishing to join the Sanatan Khalsa School, the Khalsa School would be struck off from the list of Aided Institutions. The Manager of the Sanatan School, Chaudhri Atar Singh, knew his concern was a bogus one, but he would not close it. My entreaties and those of my beloved pupil, Hukam Chand Sehgal, his own sister's son, proved of no avail. But what we had failed to achieve for years was done in five minutes. Dr. Stein's services were transferred to the Government of India in the Foreign Department. His successor, Mr. W.T. Wright, visited both the schools in connection with the annual inspection and went further off towards Sayyad and Chakwal. Some days after he paid a surprise visit to the Sanatan School, and, finding that the trained staff had gone and the registers were not kept as required by the Departmental rules at once passed orders withdrawing recognition of the school. From that day it ceased to exist.

The extent of my enthusiasm may be judged from the fact that despite repeated failures, when I obtained a brief respite from my work in the schools in the district I entertained

in all seriousness the idea of establishing a Khalsa High School in Rawalpindi. My friend, Rai Sahib Lala Kashi Ram Anand, placed his *Kothi* at my disposal for this purpose on a nominal rent of Rs 30/- per mensem. Seth Dhanjibhoy gave us rupees five hundred for the purpose. Other friends promised aid; but party propaganda of some men in the local Singh Sabha and the opposition of Rai Bahadur Sardar Boota Singh, who had been led to think that our success would mean the failure of his Shresht-Niti-Shala School, served as a damper.\* Rupees five hundred received from Seth Dhanjibhoy were handed over to Bhai Mahan Singh for the Sukho Khalsa School and the balance to several firms for the school furniture supplied by them.

\* A decade later, however, the city of Rawalpindi had its Khalsa ttigli School founded in 1913 with the efforts of Sardar Bahadur Sardar Mohan Singh and soon became a very prosperous school having 49 sections "P to the tenth class, with 55 teachers and 2487 students, *vide* Headmaster's letter of 25th November, 1941. The management of the School was in the hands " a Committee with the above Sardar Bahadur Sardar Mohan Singh, CLE., \*\* its president. 'Among all the Sikh Schools, it is the only school which " self-supporting', said the Headmaster,—G.

## CHAPTER XLVI

## I ENTER GOVERNMENT SERVICE

When in charge of the Shresht-Niti High School, I conceived the idea of raising it to the status of an Intermediate College. The Secretary of the School Committee was my own cousin, Bhagat Govind Das, M.A., Advocate. The Committee of control had been purged and had been strengthened by co-opting well-meaning men. Of these Sardar Budh Singh, retired Extra Assistant Commissioner, was, indeed, an acquisition. He was withal a devout Sikh of the old type whom I held in great regard. His influence over the proprietor, Sardar Boota Singh, was believed to be great. All things now being favourable, I set myself to the task of providing the institution with first class staff. Sardar Niranjana Singh, M.A., of Gujranwala (now Sant Teja Singh of Mastuana)\* an all-round good man, was then

*\*Sant Teja Singh, M.A..LL.B., A.M. (Harvard) :*

First name Niranjana Singh Mehta; born June, 1877, at Balowali, distt. Gujranwala; father, Dr. Ralia Singh, mother, Sada Kaur (Ram Kaur); studied in the village Mosque-School, and at Fazilka and Lahore, matriculated from the Mission High School Gujranwala in 1894; graduated from the Govt. College, Lahore, 1898; passed M.A., 1900; LL.B. in 1901; appointed Asstt. Suptt. (Salt), Deptt. at Sambhar, 1902; joined Khalsa College Amritsar as Vice-Principal, 1904 (on a year's leave from the Salt Deptt.); resigned from the Salt Deptt., 1905; acting Principal of the Khalsa College for nine months; turned to spiritual life and was baptized by Sant Atar Singh at Tarn Taran in 1906, renamed Teja Singh, went to Europe and America for study, sailing from Bombay, August, 1906; spent seven years abroad in educational, political and religious activities, returning to India in June, 1913; Mastuana, 1913-15; Harimandar Sewa 1915 (six months); Principal, Girls High School, Bhasaur; Khalsa High School, Kallar, 1916; Vice-Principal and Principal Guru Nanak Khalsa College, Gujranwala, 1917-1919; Principal Teachers' College, Benares Hindu University, 1919-1920; Governor and Principal Akal College, Mastuana, 1920-,

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working as Headmaster of the Anglo-Sanskrit High School, Bhera. I offered him higher salary with a view to placing him, later, in charge of the institution. He accepted the offer, but shortly after he came to see me and ask my permission to withdraw his consent. On my insisting to know the reason of the refusal, he told me that a Professor who knew how I had incurred the displeasure of Mr. William Bell, M.A., then Director, Public Instruction, Panjab, had dissuaded him from working under me, lest the Director who had held out to him hopes of a very good appointment in the Department, might get annoyed. I did not wish to stand in the youngman's way and released him from his promise. But it then suggested itself to me that if it was really a fact that the Head of the Department in the Province was not well disposed towards me, the very idea of my running any educational institution with a hope for success was vain. Hence the first thing I did, after Sardar Niranjana Singh had left, was to proceed to Lahore and see Mr. Bell, to whom I was already known by reputation. A couple of years prior to these events, learning that I was his own favourite pupil, he had sent me a message to go and see him, but I had failed to do so. An opportunity now presented itself to renew my connection with him. He received me most kindly and when I told him what my errand was, he cordial-

*Continued from the last page.]*

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23; Principal, G.N. Khalsa College, Gujranwala, 1923-26; Prachar work 1926—; "built Gurdwaras Nanaksar, Chima, and Tapiana Sahib at Kasauli; wrote Sant Atar Singh's life at Paonta Sahib, 1938-40.—G.

*Sant Atar Singh, referred to above :*

Born Chet Sudi 1, 1922 Bk. (March, 1866) at Chima, district Sunam, Patiala State; father, Karam Singh, mother, Bholi; received elementary education in Gurmukhi from Sant Buddha Singh Nirmala; joined the 54th Sikhs in 1887 as a sepoy; left service in 1888; went to Hazur Sahib. Nander (Deccan), and took to meditation and recitation of *Nam*; preached Sikhism in Pothohar and iter areas for a number of years; began Gurusar, Mastuana, in 1900; laid the foundation stones of Kh. High School, Chakwal, 1906, Updeshak College, Gujranwala, 1907, Guru Nanak College, Gujranwala, 1917, Akal College, Mastuana, 1919; presided at the 8th session of the Sikh Edu. Conf. at Ferozepur, October 15-17, 1915; died, January 31, 1927.—G.

ly assured me of his support and said that he did not remember I had done anything to forfeit his regard. He further promised to speak to Sardar Niranjana Singh and tell him that he had no objection to his working under me. But before I could communicate the result of my interview to Sardar Niranjana Singh, my connection with the Shreshth Niti High School came to an abrupt end as already stated.

In the same week, however, I had to visit Lahore again in response to the invitation of my esteemed friend, the late Bakhshi Jaishi Ram, to attend the Prize Distribution ceremony of the Hindu Diamond Jubilee Technical School over which Mr. Bell was to preside. Lest my self-pride be wounded if Mr. Bell came to know my predicament, I seated myself on a back bench, but he was a very tall man and when he stood up to deliver his presidential address he at once recognized me and when the meeting dispersed and I failed to make my appearance, he desired Hon'ble Mr. Chatterji and Rai Sahib Bishen Das, as he was entering his landau, to look up for me. Bakhshi came running to me to bring the Director's message. Thus the meeting with Mr. Bell could not be avoided. And it is good that such was the case, for it was then that it suggested itself to Mr. Bell to take me into his department. I was a failed First Arts man, nearly 38 years old, and did not even possess a certificate of teachership. But all these disabilities could not stand in my way when the Head of the Department, who was also Undersecretary to Government, had a flattering opinion about my general equipment. He first suggested my appointment as Inspector of Schools in Beluchistan on Rs. 250-25-500 and simultaneously desired me to learn Beluchi, the study of which I at once took up. But the Beluchistan Government would not have a Hindu or a Sikh for this position. So after a couple of years waiting, I was informed that there was no suitable vacancy to be offered to me. But after some reflection he enquired if I would care to accept Rs-150 as starting pay in my own province in the new scheme which was then on the anvil. I joyfully accepted this handsome offer but when the scheme was ultimately sanctioned I was offered the post of Assistant District Inspector of Schools, Ferozepur, on Rs-

75/- per mensem as salary. I refused the offer, but on second thought, considering that I had nothing else to fall back upon, telegraphed my willingness to accept it.

I was then in my 40th year. But before I say anything about my success or failure in the Education Department, I think it will not be out of place here if I briefly relate what happened to me after my discharge from the Shreshth-Niti School. The school at Kallar had been closed and one at Sukho was being run by a local committee. But the debts I had incurred on account of them troubled me exceedingly. Since my rupture with the Lahore Arya Samaj, Vegetarian Section, on account of their shaving of the Rahtia Sikhs and with the College Section on account of my opposition to its propaganda through their journals against Sikhs and Sikhism, I was a thorn in the eyes of its leading lights. One of these good people, Lala Amolak Ram, retired Munsif, was practising as a Vakil in Rawalpindi and was also Secretary of the Rawalpindi branch of the Punjab National Bank. He thought it an act of merit to harass me by serving me with registered notices demanding immediate payment of the amount standing against me and threatening my prosecution in case of its non-payment. The threat, however, was never carried out, either because the Secretary of the Head Office of the Bank was my own cousin, Bhagat Ishwar Das, M.A., who knew I would not knowingly fail in meeting my obligations, or, because it was known that the resort to law courts would be fruitless in as much as I then owned no property which could be disposed of towards this end. The same luck, however, knocked at my door, and I awoke one morning to find myself travelling in the train to Simla in the capacity of Private Secretary to an enterprising contractor on a salary of rupees one hundred per mensem. My only duty was to take care of one hundred currency notes of Rs. 1000 each, placed in my waist-coat pocket, which had been carefully sewn. One day I was relieved of the burden, what became of the load I do not know except the fact that the same year my employer was the right hand man of the Commissariat Department in the Delhi Durbar. Perhaps, all supplies were arranged through his agency. To perform this



gigantic task he imported a regular army of agents and sub-agents. I happened to be one of these. In company with Bawa Lehna Singh, timber merchant of Lahore, I was deputed to see to the supply of grass. For the cutting of each maund of grass in the jungle round about the village of Jaidpur on the Jamna, we had to pay two annas and additional two annas had to be paid for cartage. We were promised Rs. 1/4 per maund. That is to say the net gain to us was Re. 1/- per maund. In a week or so our supply bill amounted to something like, Rs. 5,000/-. The worthy contractor to whom we supplied the grass got Rs. 2/8/- per maund from the Government. Had I kept myself in the good books of my patron, I would have become master of a lakh of rupees in the course of a few months, but somehow I came to dislike him. So presenting him a bill for the work done I went back home. Subsequently I learned that he had paid my partner three hundred rupees and had sent him away. He treated me differently. He refused to pay me anything, and appeared to grudge every penny of the amount of my bill. The following year, however, necessity arose for him to placate me. He saw me at my lodgings in Ferozepur and handed over a cheque for nine hundred rupees. This cheque I sent at once to my friends of the Punjab National Bank who never afterwards sent me registered or unregistered reminders for expediting the payment of my debts. The balance that remained, I cleared off by paying to the Bank the whole of my pay. And Rs. 25/- that I received as my travelling allowance sufficed for my needs and those of my horse and cook. A vegetarian does not need much to subsist upon. Thus in the course of a little over three years I was able to save enough to repay all my liabilities.

## CHAPTER XLVII

### CONFLICT WITH OFFICIAL SUPERIORS

From the date I joined the Education Department my connection with public life in the country ceased altogether. I now became a part and parcel, though a small one, of the Government machinery and was not supposed to be a free agent. I am glad, however, that from the date of my entry into the Department till the last day of my seventeen years of service it was vouchsafed to me to retain my individuality and I was able to assert myself in most that I did. Nothing deterred me from lending my support to poor village school-teachers and protect them from the vagaries of fellow officials even if they happened to be my seniors in grade and authority. For this reason I found myself in a very precarious situation both for the first two and a half years of my service and for the last two years. In the first case I was unluckily appointed officiating District Inspector of Schools, Ferozepur, only a few days after I joined the Department, in the place of Maulvi Abdul Ghani, B.A., who was to proceed on three months' leave. No sooner did I take over charge than any number of the Hindu teachers applied to me for a reconsideration of their cases. I found that for very frivolous reasons these poor men had been punished with fines equal to their salaries. I wondered how the Assistant Commissioner, Mr. Chrostwhaite, officer in charge of education, could have had the heart to be so cruel to poor village school-masters. I took notes of half a dozen cases in which flagrant injustice had been done and submitted them for reconsideration. The result was what had already been anticipated. The Assistant Commissioner reviewed the cases thoroughly and in all of them he remitted the fines impos-

ed. When I subsequently met him he thanked me for the interest I took in my work. This won me fame throughout the district.

In contrast to the habit of the permanent incumbent, the practice with me was to attend office regularly at 10 in the morning and leave at 4 p.m. I disposed of all my correspondence myself and never permitted office-hands to put up notes on files. The result was that work was never in arrears. There was another characteristic in me. I never danced attendance on my official superiors and never called on them without official business and that, too, very rarely. Notwithstanding there were men who saw some beauty in me and sought unasked to advance me. One such man was Mr. Earnest Maya Das, Secretary, District Board. His father was Rai Bahadur Mr. Maya Das, Executive Engineer, Canals, and Vice-President District Board. The Secretary District Board sat in the room adjoining mine. But I had never met him or spoken to him except exchanging greetings two or three times. What was my astonishment when one day, only a month after my taking over charge, when I was on tour, I received a letter telling me that the District Inspector had returned and had applied for the cancellation of his leave, the reason being that the young Secretary of the District Board had personally suggested to the Deputy Commissioner, Colonel Barton, President of the District Board, that I should be confirmed as District Inspector and Maulvi Abdul Ghani I be not allowed to come back. The suggestion, though made in good faith, was quite impracticable. I was most junior in service and had not even been confirmed in my appointment as an Assistant District Inspector. I hurriedly returned to headquarters and protested to the Secretary against his injudicious action. His father supported Mr. Abdul Ghani. The matter ultimately went to the Deputy Commissioner who allowed Mr. Abdul Ghani to resume his duties, remarking at the same time that the good work done by I me might be placed on my personal record. Thus it was that though Mr. Abdul Ghani bore me ill will, he could do me no harm.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### DEV SAMAJ STRONGHOLD CAPTURED

I regard the year 1903 A.D. as year of great moment to me for it is the year in which I entered Government service and qualified myself for a pension, however small, and, thus, obtained secure means of livelihood, but also for the fact that it was in this year that I chanced to meet men who were destined to have a marked influence upon my career. Of these, the first and most remarkable, was Sardar Lai Singh, Pleader, Moga, who, when a student, frequently visited me at Lahore during my tenure of office as Secretary of the Punjab Mutual Hindu Relief Fund. Through him I became acquainted with Sardar Maluk Singh, father of the late Sardar Wasawa Singh, B.A., Deputy Collector Canals, and Rai Bahadur Doctor Mathra Das, then Sub-Assistant Surgeon, Moga, the famous eye-specialist, and Sardar Jhanda Singh, Zaildar, of the village Nathuwala in the same Tehsil, and grandfather of Sardar Harbans Singh Brar, Barrister-at-Law, and later a member of the Imperial Legislative Assembly. All these men were destined to be epoch-makers.

Sardar Maluk Singh was a well-read man of high character, lofty ideas and a feeling heart. He had enough and to spare and luckily never needed to stoop to the crooked ways of the men of the world. My duty took me to Moga very often where I usually put up in the Zailghar. The first Sikh who daily accosted me on the road in front of the Tehsil was Sardar Maluk Singh and I was irresistibly drawn towards him by his bewitching smile and bland manner. But I could never gather courage to introduce myself to him. Subsequently I learnt that the handsome double-storeyed

Gurdwara building of the Singh Sabha owed its existence chiefly, if not entirely, to the generosity and public spirit of Sardar Malu Singh. He was the first to carry the torch in this part of the province of Sikh renaissance for which, as has been noted in the\* foregoing pages, the Singh Sabha movement was responsible.

My acquaintance with Sardar Jhanda Singh began with an amusing incident at Ferozepur. Just as I was going out for my evening walks I saw a dark-faced dwarfish man sitting on a *tumtuna* with Sardar Attar Singh of Ratta Khera, a handsome middle aged man, and staring at me. I forthwith approached him and demanded an explanation for his conduct. The reply couched in a respectful and affectionate tone simply staggered me and I felt greatly ashamed of myself. He was, said he, joyfully telling his companion, I Sardar Attar Singh, that I was the new Sikh District Inspector of Schools. Naturally I felt very small within myself. At that time, I took the man to be a sort of a dependant of Sardar Attar Singh. I met him again at the house of Sardar Lai Singh at Moga, with whom he appeared to be on intimate terms. I was then to go home on short leave. I asked Sardar Lai Singh if he could keep my horse and see to its wants during my absence. Sardar Jhanda Singh, offered to do this duty for me. I accepted the offer, provided he agreed to receive rupee one per day for feeding it and otherwise caring for it. What was my astonishment when on return to duty, I visited Sardar Jhanda Singh's farm house in his village Nathuwala and saw in his stable half a dozen horses and numerous cattle. Any number of high roofed big *kutchas* houses were full of fodder. It was then I came to know that Jhanda Singh was the biggest farmer in the Moga Tehsil. Dame Nature had compensated him for his ungainly exterior by showering her other blessings on him. At the sight of poverty and distress he would cry like a child and there was rarely an occasion when he was approached for help by the needy and there was no response from him. To corrupt officials, to bad characters in his *zail*, he was a terror. Low-minded men, men who live on intrigue and calumny, he scrupulously avoided. He was rarely seen at home; for calls for help kept him busy and he was on foot for days and nights. Like the village folk

he was generally clad in Khaddi cloth and he hated a display of "riches which he had in abundance. Such a man is an asset to any community. To me at least, he proved to be a very valuable one.

The Arya Samajists had a Primary School of their own in the sacred city of Muktsar. This was only a thin end of the wedge and I was sure that if their activities were not nipped in the bud they would prove harmful to Sikh interests.

I broached to Sardar Bhagat Singh, the leading Sikh of Muktsar, the idea of establishing a Khalsa High School in Muktsar to provide against this menace. The Sardar readily promised help, but before I could have availed myself of it I met Lala Chela Ram, B.A., B.T., Headmaster of the District Board Anglo-Vernacular Middle School, Moga. He was one of the most esteemable youngmen that I had known. He was son-in-law of my old friend Bhagat Rewal Das, for a longtime manager of the Arya Kanya Mahavidyala, Jullundur, and, as such, he had a claim on my affection and regard. He was an Arya Samajist by faith, but he was broad-minded in his general outlook. Somehow he had come to know of my intentions with regard to the Muktsar Arya School. He boldly came to me with a suggestion for the raising of the Moga District Board Anglo-Vernacular Middle School to the status of a High School. That, said he, would be a greater service to the Sikhs, for I would be thus counteracting the influence of the godless creed of the Dev Samaj which was capable of doing greater injury than the Arya Samaj, which, after all, was a theistic body. I fell in with my friend's views, after receiving an assurance from Sardar Bhagat Singh, that he would see to the establishment of a Sikh educational institution there, I decided to carry out Chela Ram's behest.

As stated in a previous chapter, I was a great admirer of my teacher at the Government College, Lahore, Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri, *alias* Satyanand Agnihotri, *alias* Dev Guru Bhagwan.\* It was no business of mine to quarrel

\* The founder of the Dev Samaj was Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri, called 'Dev Guru Bhagwan' and 'Bhagwan Dev-Atma' by his Dev-Samajist disciples. He was born at Akbarpur, district Cawnpore (U.P.), on December

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with him if he first proclaimed himself as an apostle of God, and later, drove out his liege lord, and usurped His kingdom himself. He was a Brahman by birth, a caste which provides teachers for all religious denominations. They have peculiar aptitude for adapting themselves to changed conditions. They led the India Mob as Bhikshus in Buddhistic times, and when Buddhism lost its sway in India they formed a new religious hierarchy and guided the destinies of the Indian peoples. In more recent times in our own province, when political power passed into the hands of the Sikhs, they did not find it difficult to discard their temples and idols, their *yagyopavit* and other paraphernalia, wore *Keshas arm dasfars* (turbans) and became custodians of Sikh places of worship and interpreters of Sikh scriptures. Why should not Udev *Gum* Bhagwan, thought I, have carved out a Kingdom for himself out of the debris of fallen religious hierarchies? But as a new convert to the creed of Guru Govind Singh, I could not bear the sight of simple Sikh rustics of the Ferozepur district, inhabited by Barar Jats, the most distinguished of the clans who followed the lead of the Tenth Guru, being exploited by the astute Dev Guru Bhagwan *M Moga*. I, therefore, readily accepted Chela Ram's suggestion and began preparations for an assault on the Dev Samaj High School at Moga, the chief citadel from where the local branch of the Samaj carried its operations. The establishment of a rival Sikh institution was out of question, for, then, as now, there was a great dearth of selfless workers in the locality. Again the head of the Dev Samaj in Moga and Manager of their school, Munshi, afterwards *Sarfaal Sahib*, Jamiyat Singh, retired Headmaster of the local District Board School, was a very influential man in the *ilqa*, both with

*Continued from the last page.]*

20,1850. Completing his early education in his home town, he joined the Engineering College, Roorkee, and was employed as Drawing Master in the Government College, Lahore. Here he became a Brahmo, and later a missionary\* of the Brahmo Samaj. In 1882, he took his life's vow and in 1887 founded the Dev Samaj. He was a forceful speaker and a prolific writer with some three hundred pamphlets and books to his credit. He died on April 3, 1929.—G.

the people and with the local officers. It was a practice with him to invite the latter, especially if they happened to be Europeans, and show them his school. On the walls of the school, 'Honesty is the best policy,' 'Speak truth always' and similar other mottoes [were displayed on conspicuous places. And strange to say that these officers, astute though they generally were, had really come to believe that these lofty principles were not only inculcated by the Samaj but were actually believed in and practised. How difficult my task, therefore, was, may be imagined. There were other difficulties. My own position was low. I was only an Assistant District Inspector and the District Inspector, Mr. Abdul Ghani, was not on good terms with me. An opportunity, however, presented itself after about a year when the District Inspector was transferred and I had to act in his place till his successor came and took over charge.

It was a practice with Colonel Barton, Deputy Commissioner and President District Board, to collect Zaildars and Lambardars, the guardians of peace and order in the villages, and pay them their allowances personally. I drafted a representation, had it signed by about 80 of these notables through the good offices of my friend Sardar Jhanda Singh and at once submitted it to Colonel Barton with a strong endorsement. "Zamindar women", said I, in my report, "were so much afraid of the atheistic creed of the Dev Samaj that they would rather see their sons dead than be educated in the Dev Samaj school," and, I added, "that they would gladly part with their ornaments and make a gift of them to the District Board, in case the latter was short of funds." The Deputy Commissioner was dumb-founded. He had read any number of eulogistic references about the Dev Samaj school from high officers of the school Log Book and had himself added his own tribute. He took exception to all that I said, but at the end he remarked that he would believe me if the ornaments were deposited in the Treasury. He further directed me to take down names of donors during my tour in the district and make sure how much money the People were willing to contribute. I jumped with delight, for all this meant that the Deputy Commissioner was willing to consider

the proposal if adequate public support was forthcoming. Here was my chance. In reply I submitted that the proper person to do this duty was the Tehsildar of the ilaqa, for I visited only those villages where there were schools. My suggestion was reasonable and was accordingly accepted. The Tehsildar, Diwan Ganda Mall, though at heart friendly to me, was a very timid man. He was very much afraid of Sardar Jamiyat Singh, and he saw his safety lay in postponing action on the matter *sine die*. To add to this, Maulvi Abdul Ghani's successor, Syed Maqbul Shah, immediately on taking over charge, chose to adopt a hostile attitude towards me and thought it an act of merit to oppose all suggestions coming from me. The Inspector Rai Bahadur Umrao Singh thought a contribution of Rs. 3,000 from the public was enough, but Mr. Maqbul Shah had no corner in his heart for Hindus and Sikhs. He had already proposed the transfer of several schools from the Jungle ilaqa inhabited by Sikh Jats to *Bet* villages (villages in riverain tracts) mostly populated by Musalmans. He would not allow the proposal to be considered until and unless the people subscribed Rs. 30,000. This was an impossible condition unheard of and unprecedented. Colonel Barton was a pucca bureaucrat. He trusted the District Inspector Maqbul Shah and set his foot on the proposal. For over a year the proposal hung fire. Meantime a deputation of the Dev Samaj waited upon Mr. Bell, the Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, with a complaint against me. The latter wrote to the Deputy Commissioner angrily warning me to cease behaving like a Nihang or else I would have to be chucked off. But the officer in charge of education, Mr. Young, I.C.S., Assistant Commissioner, saw that there was nothing against me for I was only trying to raise the status of the Moga District Board School, which was a legitimate activity. When I saw Mr. Bell subsequently I found no difficulty in pricking the Dev Samaj bubble and destroying whatever sympathy he might have had for this organization. "If, observed I, "hanging mottoes on the walls of a school meant inculcating moral principles I would raise the tone of all District schools under me if enough funds were placed in my hands." *M* hearty laughter in response convinced me that my remarks had

carried conviction.

I should here state that both the District Inspector, Mr. Maqbul Shah, and the Inspector, Rai Bahadur Umrao Singh, reported against me in their annual reports with the result that though all men appointed along with me under the new scheme had been confirmed I was still on probation. This I was to know from Mr. Bell himself. I used to visit him frequently for somehow he had come to regard me as a sort of a ward whom it was his duty to protect. On the occasion of one of these visits, he inquired if I would like to be transferred to Gujrat in the same capacity. I replied in the negative for, I thought, I was quite happy in Ferozepur. But Mr. Bell told me that he wanted to transfer me for, said he, Lala Umrao Singh's opposition stood in the way of my confirmation. In the Rawalpindi Division the reports might be favourable. I was stunned to hear this. For if I could have any claim for sympathy and support, it was on Rai Bahadur Umrao Singh. He had actuated me, when I was his pupil in the Central Training College, Lahore, to write a series of letters in the *Tribune* against Mr. Bell's appointment over him as a Superintendent whenever he had to officiate as Principal, and this had led to my failure in obtaining the certificate of teachership. What a strange fatality! My own teacher, to carry whose behests I had jeopardised my life's interests, was stabbing me in the dark! And the man, a foreigner, whom I had unwarily wronged, under malevolent influences, was seeking to advance me! In a word the transfer was immediately ordered and I was told to go and get ready. I had only to wait for a week or so. This time I spent with my esteemed friend Sodhi Ajit Singh of Buttar, from where I inspected schools in the neighbourhood.

It was during this week that I was introduced to *Pirzada* Anwar-ul-Haq, new Tehsildar of Moga. It was an instance of love at first sight. If he was a *Pirzada*, I was a Bhagat-zada, a descendant of a Hindu saint, a worshipper of God. I briefly told him why I had interested myself in the raising of the status of the District Board Middle School, Moga. The *Pirzada* gave me solemn assurance of his help. This was as if my mantle fell on him. He took up the cross, as it were, and succeeded where I had failed. On the way I

saw Rai Sahib Lala Dina Nath, Revenue Assistant at Ferozepur and told him how a Hindu Patwari in Kalyan, a village in the Bahia ilaqa, to which place the ancestors of the Phulkian States belonged, had been carrying on atheistic propaganda for upwards of two decades. Rai Sahib, too, promised help. Thus by the time I joined my post at Gujrat, the Dev Samaj Patwari of Kalyan was transferred to Mallanwalla, a village in the Bet ilaqa where the inhabitants were all Musalmans and there was no scope for propaganda work in the interests of the Dev Samaj. *Pirzada* Anwar-ul-Haq, on his part, set himself to his self-imposed task with the zeal of a crusader. Having failed to convert Syed Maqbul Shah to his views, he simply ignored him and manfully pursued his aim. He sent for Sardar Lai Singh Vakil and Jhanda Singh Zaildar and asked them to submit a largely signed petition from the Zamindars of the Tehsil offering to pay one anna per rupee of their *Maliana* (the amount of land revenue due from them). This was no sooner said than done. Thus the required sum of thirty thousand rupees was collected in no time. This alarmed the Dev Samaj people whose representation and telegraphic complaints to the Government led the Financial Commissioner to order a refund of the amount. In vain did the local authorities plead that the contribution was a voluntary one. *Pirzada* Sahib, however, was not a man who would permit grass to grow under his feet or allow anyone, even high-placed officials, to baulk his efforts. He sent for Sardars Lai Singh and Jhanda Singh again and asked them to stand outside when he refunded the amount and receive back from each man the whole or part of his share as he emerged from the Tehsil. The suggestion was gratefully accepted and acted upon. In this way something like rupees thirteen thousand were again got back. A committee was appointed to administer this trust. Some three or four thousand rupees that Sardar Lai Singh had brought from His Highness Sir Heera Singh, the good old Maharaja of Nabha of blessed memory, as a donation for this purpose were added to this fund. Again complaints went to the Government. The local authorities were again reprimanded. The Deputy Commissioner, Colonel Barton, sent for Sardar Lai Singh and asked him to make over to him the amount collected. But Sardar Lai Singh refused compliance. He said the money had

been obtained from his brotherhood and he held it in trust. The Deputy Commissioner was in a fix. He sent for Sardar Lai Singh again and assumed a conciliatory attitude. Noting the change, Sardar Lai Singh offered to transfer the money to the Deputy Commissioner, as President of the District Board, provided he agreed to raise the status of the District Board Anglo-Vernacular Middle school, Moga, to the status of a High School and the school was christened Barton District Board High School. The Deputy Commissioner had, thus, to accede to the popular demand. By chance, the Inspector, Lala Nand Kishore, was proceeding to Ferozepur in connection with the inspection of schools there. He was prevailed upon to halt at Moga and participate in the opening ceremony of the new Department of the District Board School, Moga, for which departmental sanction was obtained in the due course. There were rejoicings in the whole Tehsil. I received the glad tidings in camp. Tears of joy trickled down my cheeks and my heart went forth to the Father Almighty in thanks-giving. The attendance in the Dev Samaj High School became so thin that it had to suspend operations for full five years. Had not Lala Chela Ram left the Headmastership of the District Board School and taken to the profession of law, the Dev Samaj people would never have ventured to reopen its doors.

## CHAPTER XLIX

MY CONFIRMATION AND SIMULTANEOUS PROMOTION  
I RECEIVE ATTENTION FROM C.I.D.

When at Ferozepur I suffered a very sad bereavement by the untimely demise of my youngest brother, Bhagat Balmokand, B.A., LL.B., whom I loved most and who was the idol not only of his near relatives but also of the whole town of Rawalpindi. Shortly after my transfer to Gujrat I lost a sincere friend in Mr. C.A. Young, Assistant Commissioner, who was killed at Dharamsala on the 6th of April, 1905, as he lay asleep, by the fall of his bungalow by an earthquake shock. I was indebted for his friendship to Syed Maqbul Shah, whose complaints against me afforded me any number of opportunities to convince Mr. Young of the value of the work I was putting in. He liked me so much that when I saw him for the last time before his transfer to Dharamsala he made me promise to spend some weeks with him during the next summer. The earthquake was a great holocaust and responsible for the loss of thousands in the Kangra hills. It was early in the morning when I was out in the fields in the Gujrat District when the ground under my feet tossed to and fro and I actually felt as if it was going to be broken into pieces and perish. The morning papers the following day brought me the sad tidings. Truly cried a philosopher : "Vanity, Vanity, all is Vanity."

Till then, in the words of holy Nanak '*Kiri dhakke de*, I had been knocking from place to place in search of work and thus to earn a living. My living was now made, thanks to Mr. Bell's generosity. When on the occasion of a visit to him during the summer of 1906 I enquired how long I should have to wait for my confirmation, he took up a chit, scribbled something on it with a

blue pencil and dismissed me with the remark, "I am parsing orders that you shall be confirmed, and I shall make you a District Inspector very soon." Thus with one stroke of pen he not only confirmed me in my grade, but before the year closed he also confirmed me in the grade of Rs. 100/- and transferred me to Jhelum as District Inspector of Schools.

In my new district I worked with my usual zeal and earned the goodwill of the Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Connolly, and of the Divisional Inspector, Khan Bahadur Maulavi Umr-ud-Din, M.A. All Tehsildars of the district, particularly Misar Heera Nand, Tehsildar of Chakwal, strongly supported me in my efforts to improve the schools, particularly in the matter of locating new school houses at sufficiently long distances from their respective villages and in healthy surroundings, for instance the buildings of the Sohawa Primary School in Jhelum Tehsil and Padshahan Primary School in Chakwal Tehsil.

The political atmosphere those days was unusually tense. The disturbances in Rawalpindi, a year previous, 1907, when a number of Lawyers were arrested for sedition, and the burning of a Sikh Gurdwara in Adhwal, in Chakwal Tehsil, 'had set all sorts of run ours afloat. The Government were greatly perturbed. That was a time when low-minded men, who had their own axes to grind, poisoned the ears of the district authorities against whomsoever they had some grudge. There was one thing in me. I never knew to mince matters. Whenever I had anything to say or do, I said and did in my own way. I remember I had made myself particularly obnoxious in the eyes of a Musalman clique which had accessibility to the Deputy Commissioner and took mean advantage of this circumstance. But this I did not very much mind. On politics I had my own views. I was a government official myself, though a petty one. I had also other personal reasons for avoiding contact with men those days in the forefront of political arena. I was, thus, the last person to be considered as a political or an anti-government individual. But still I found myself classed as a political bugbear. I came to know of this when one day I was confidentially informed by a kind friend that I

was being shadowed by the Criminal Investigation Department people. I failed to account for this espionage, unless, of course it was my open opposition to the introduction of the revised constitution of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, at a meeting of the College Council, held a month or so previous, which I had been officially called upon to attend.

For full seven or eight years prior to this, i.e., ever since the time my proposal for taking over the Khalsa Anglo-Vernacular Aided Middle Schools at Kallar and Sukho was turned down by the new management, I had never set my foot on the premises of the College.

Bhai Jawahir Singh, the Secretary of the Council, had lost the sympathies of the Government members on the Khalsa College management on account of his interference in the internal and external economy of the College and riding rough-shod over the feelings of the principal, Dr. Oman. As a result thereof, the control of the college was transferred by one stroke of pen to the Amritsar party under the leadership of Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia,\*

\* Sardar, after Sardar Bahadur Dr. Sir, Sunder Singh Majithia, born on 17th February, 1872, was the second son of the well known Raja Surat Singh Majithia. The Raja died in 1881 when both of his sons, Sardar Sunder Singh and his elder brother Sardar Umrao Singh, were minors. Their guardianship, and management of their estate at Majithia in the Amritsar district and at Dumri in the Gorakhpur district, devolved upon Captain Sardar Gulab Singh Atariwala, and, on his death in 1887, Lala Gurmukh Rai, a Pleader of Amritsar, was appointed to the charge. In November 1882 Sardar Sunder Singh, along with his brother, was admitted to Government School, Amritsar, and, later, studied at the Aitchison College, Lahore. He was married to the daughter of Sardar Bishan Singh of Kandola, maternal uncle of the then Raja of Faridkot, and, on her death soon afterward he married a granddaughter of Sardar Sir Atar Singh, K.C.I.E., of Bhadaur.

His public life began with the year 1894 and in the following year he became a member of the Khalsa College Amritsar Managing Council. He was the Secretary of the Saragarhi Memorial Committee, and his Report gives in detail the work done by the various Sikh associations in this connection. In 1902 he laid the foundation of the Chief Khalsa Diwan and served as its Secretary from

*[Continued on the next page.]*

who became Secretary in place of Bhai Jawahir Singh. They now sought to take possession of the Lahore Khalsa Diwan by proposing the affiliation with it of about seventy Singh Sabhas (mostly bogus

*[ Continued from the last page.]*

1902 to 1920, and as its President in 1932-33. He was the chief promoter of the Sikh Educational Conference Movement in 1908 and to his selfless and devoted service to the cause of Sikh education is mostly due the net-work of Sikh schools in the Punjab—a source of religious, social and political advancement of the Sikhs. He was one of the original founders of the Punjab and Sindh Bank Ltd., Amritsar, in July 1908 and was on its directorate for about three decades. On the establishment of the Reserve Bank of India, he was appointed as its Governor.

In 1909 Sardar Sunder Singh was nominated to the Viceroy's Legislative Council where he successfully piloted the Sikh Anand Marriage Act. After the Minto-Morley Reforms, he became a member of the Punjab Legislative Council. He was made *Sardar Bahadur* in 1911 and C.I.E. in 1920. In 1921 he was appointed as Revenue Member of the Punjab Government, holding that post up to 1926, and was knighted on his retirement. On the occasion of the Jubilee of the Panjab University, the degree of Doctor of Oriental Learning *Honoris causa* was conferred upon him.

He became a member of the first autonomous Cabinet of the Punjab on 1st April, 1937, and was the leader of the Khalsa National Progressive Party in the Punjab Legislature, holding these positions to the end of his life on 2nd April, 1941.

He was a pioneer in promoting sugar industry in India and his factory at Sardar Nagar in the Gorakhpur district, U.P., established in 1911, is the biggest in India.

Khalsa College, Amritsar, was his most favourite centre of activities. He took over the charge of its secretaryship from Bhai Jawahir Singh in 1902 and continued to serve the College in this capacity up to 1912 when he was compelled to sever his connection with it under official displeasure. On the withdrawal of direct Government control in 1920, Sardar Sunder Singh returned to the management of the College as President of the College Council and its Managing Committee and held this position up to the end of his life.

Sir Sunder Singh left three sons. The eldest, S. Kripal Singh, who became the President of the Khalsa College, died in February 1940. Sir Sardar Surindra Singh looks after the Sugar Factory at Sardar Nagar (Gorakhpur), A.P., and Sardar Surjit Singh is now the President of the Khalsa College, Amritsar.



ones) at a big meeting held in the premises of the Government' College. My voice counted for something those days and I was easily able to thwart the attempt.

The Diwan, however, had practically died with the ousting of Bhai Jawahir Singh from the College management and on its debris a new Diwan under the name of Chief Khalsa Diwan was established by the Amritsar party with its headquarters at Amritsar. In its wake soon came the Punjab and Sindh Bank Ltd., with its headquarters also at Amritsar. And just as the Punjab National Bank had acted and reacted on the Arya Samaj movement and its educational institutions and had lent them life and strength, the Punjab and Sind Bank, likewise, proved a bulwark of strength to the Chief Khalsa Diwan and its subsidiary movements like the Sikh Educational Conference, the Sikh Orphanage, the Parchar; work, etc. With increased responsibilities and by their devotion to work, the leading lights of the Chief Khalsa Diwan naturally gained popular support. My attitude towards them, however, was that of indifference, for I saw things from a different angle and co-operation with them was impossible. Years rolled on and the ship of the College seemed to be sailing smoothly when a leakage was observed and an overhaul was ordered of the whole administration that had led to this *contretemps*.

This is how it happened. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, Sir Charles Rivaz, who was pro-Sikh in his sympathies, had by special efforts enabled the college to collect several lacs of rupees so that the management might have a building of its own suited to the name and fame of the community. When the foundations were laid and building operations were started, complaints reached the Government that there was some *golmol* in the matter of the edifices put up. When the Chief Engineer deputed by Government came to make enquiries and examine the material used, he was hooted and insulted by some hooligans among the student community. No notice was, however, taken of this outburst. But when at a meeting of the Managing Committee it was, later, decided to quietly dispense with the honorary services of the Engineer, Sardar Dharam Singh of Gharjakh (Gujranwala), and

place the building operations directly under government control, some one observed that Sardar Dharam Singh's was a labour of love. "Pooh, labour of love !" blurted out Major Hill, an officer in the employ of the Patiala State. This remark was taken not only as an insult to Sardar Dharam Singh himself, who was an esteemable, easy-going man, but to the whole Sikh community. There was a huge uproar in the College compound where a large number of students had gathered. The little incident was magnified into a grave insult [not only on the part of Major Hill alone but also on that of the Government itself. Students attended the classes wearing black crape on their arms and an acrimonious agitation was started in the columns of the *Khalsa Advocate*, the official organ of the Chief Khalsa Diwan, and other papers. The Government was taken aback. Sir Charles Rivaz himself was shocked. But he could not do anything, for he was just going to relinquish charge of his exalted office. His successor or his advisers failed to grasp the situation. Instead of holding an enquiry to fix responsibility for the untoward incidents related above, it was thought that it would be sufficient to place the management of the College under the direct control of the Commissioner, Lahore Division. A few months later, a draft of the revised constitution was supplied to the members and they were asked to attend a special meeting on the premises of the Khalsa College and give it their approval. In the draft of the revised constitution the old glaring defects such as the appointment of members for life time without paying any subscription for membership and their haphazard selection were retained. And the advisers being the Amritsar bloc of members, the names of men who, like myself, had, at one time or other, opposed them in their ambitious propaganda, were naively omitted. I laughed at this ingenuity of my friends of the Chief Khalsa Diwan and resolved to offer a stout opposition, not that I was over-anxious to continue as a member of the Committee of Management, for long before this I had come to regard the Khalsa College, Amritsar, as a Government College minus Government discipline. No member had free hand in it, hence it was idle to think of doing any constructive work without the previous sanction of Government. In fact I

had expressed this view in the columns of my paper the *Khalsa* nearly a decade back. But I did not see why even the nominal control of the College should go out of the hands of the original promoters, without a protest, and made over to the Amritsar members who had not only no hand either in the conception of its idea or its foundation, but had actually given no end of trouble to its original promoters. So when the meeting took place, I stood up to point out to the President, Col. Younghusband, Commissioner, Lahore Division, that the meeting could not proceed for there was no quorum. My friend Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia, Secretary of the Council, was then seen breathing something into the ears of the President. I drew the attention of the President to this impropriety and at the same time observed that the plea that some members had sent proxies could not hold for, under the fundamental rules of the Council, proxies were not allowed. But despite my protests the proceedings were allowed to continue. In vain did I request the Hon'ble chairman to circulate the draft of the revised constitution and receive suggestions for its improvement. I even suggested that electoral colleges should be established in all Sikh districts so that the whole Sikh community might be represented on the management of the College. In reply to his contention that in ca\*bC the meeting was deferred the Panjab University would disaffiliate the College, I respectfully submitted that when for so many months the University had not carried out its threat against the College when it was under the control of Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia, there was no reason why now when he, the Commissioner, was practically its over-lord, the University would object to the postponement of the meeting for a maturer consideration of the scheme by representative Sikhs throughout the country. But mine was a cry in the wilderness. Bhai Maya Singh seconded my proposition, but to no effect. If I mistake not, our protests were not even recorded. Thus my friends of the Amritsar party had their own way, and the constitution as it stood was passed. Later I learnt that Sardar Sahib Bhai Mohan Singh had seen the Commissioner prior to the holding of this meeting and like myself had the temerity to offer certain suggestions but he was snubbed

for his trouble, for the commissioner knew he was a petty Government subordinate and as such deserved scant courtesy. His treatment of me was quite different. He was all urbanity and civility itself when addressing me. Later he must have known who I was. And bearing in mind the general belief that these big European officers have only ears but not eyes, it is easy to conjecture that it was my behaviour at this meeting of the College which was responsible for the attention to me of the gentlemen of the C.I.D. and for my transfer to Ludhiana under Mr. P.J. Fagan, Deputy Commissioner, notorious for his antipathies for English-knowing Indians of independent views. \_

From the very first visit that I paid to him I could gather that he was not friendly to me. In whatever I said or did he smelt a rat. To relieve him of this trouble I proceeded on three months' privilege-leave on the expiration of which I was transferred by way of punishment to the teaching line and sent to work as Secondmaster in the Government School, Palampur, Kangra district, believed to be educational *Kala Pani* (Andamans), to which employees of the Educational Department, not in the good books of the powers that be, were transported. To me, however, this *Kala Pani* proved to be a real paradise to all ends and purposes. I had the best house in that small place to live in. The European apothecary in charge of the Civil Dispensary, the Tehsildar and Naib Tehsildar and even the Headmaster under whom I was sent to work were all kindness and attention. I had very pleasant companions to walk with in the tea gardens, the music of the crystal hill torrents to delight my ears and a vast deep valley receiving the shadows of the lordly Himalayan trees on its shining waters to feast my eyes upon. My house became, in a few weeks, a sort of temple where recitations from the holy Sikh and Hindu scriptures were listened to with rapt attention. And it was not without a wrench that I felt compelled to get myself transferred to Jullundur, a few months after, to be near my ailing surviving brother, Bhagat Gokal Chand, B. A., Headmaster • the Government High School, Rawalpindi.

What action the Government took in the matter of the

stone-throwing incident and how it apportioned the blame on this account I am not aware of, for I never cared to enquire about it] But this much I do know from what I heard that for a number of years it went on blowing hot and cold in the same breath till it ultimately decided to wash its hands off the whole affair and allow the Sikhs to run the institution as best as they could which, thanks to the endless efforts of Sardar, now Sir, Sundar Singh Majithia, is rising from strength to strength.

My stay at Ludhiana, though a brief one, was not quite uneventful, in a way, for I found myself in a position, indirectly though, to lend my support in the matter of the establishment of the local Khalsa High School. The Inspector of Schools, Rai Bahadur Lala Umrao Singh, had somehow taken umbrage, perhaps from patriotic motives, at the thought of a huge number of Sikh scholars in the Mission High School. He sent for me and enquired if I could suggest to the local Sikh gentry the idea of opening a High School for Sikh boys. This was no sooner said than done. My young friend, Sardar Bachan Singh, Advocate, threw himself heart and soul into the matter, and, in a few weeks time, the Khalsa School was on its legs. The American Missionaries, on their part, were not silent spectators of what was going on. What passed between them and the Department I do not know. But it was generally understood that the Rai Bahadur's transfer soon after to another Division was the result of the representations of the *Padris* of Ludhiana.

Rai Bahadur Umrao Singh, with all his faults, was a man of a strong personality, of ideas, and in the pursuance of his aim he knew how to put in his whole strength. In this particular instance he set his heart to see that the Khalsa High School, Ludhiana, was granted necessary recognition. Immediately after his transfer from the Jullundur Division, which he appears to have taken to heart, he proceeded home on leave and died there shortly after. The last words he uttered, his son Lala Manohar Lai, M.A., told me afterwards, were of thanks-giving that the Khalsa High School, Ludhiana, had been granted recognition and was thus on a sound footing. He gave his life as sacrifice to his opinions.

## CHAPTER L

### MY ROVING CAREER

I served in the Jullundur School only for six or seven months. But my stay there was a joy to me. The whole staff was good and the scholars exceptionally well-behaved and intelligent. On account of the town already having two well-conducted Arya High schools, the boys of the Government High School were mostly Musalmans. They came from the surrounding *Basils* (suburban villages) populated by Pathans, descendants of the nobles who had held sway in the place from ages past. It was such a pleasure to help them in their studies. The Headmaster, Lala Gokal Chand, B.A., of Chiniot, particularly was a most esteemable man. The only Sikh on the school staff was the Head Persian teacher, Munshi Jiwan Singh Man of Tuto Majra in the Hoshiarpur district, the oldest hand in the institution. As a worthy grandson of Captain Prem Singh Man, one of the loyal followers of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, and for his own personal virtues, he was highly respected in the whole of the Doaba. Captain Prem Singh had held the command [of the fortress of Kotla (Kangra Hills) under the Governor, Sardar Lelma Singh Majeethia.\* He preferred an exile in the far off

\* Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia was the eldest son of the great Sardar Desa Singh Majithia, the other two being Sardar Gujar Singh and Sardar Ranjodh Singh of Baddowal fame. On his father's death in 1832, Sardar Lehna Singh succeeded him in all his estates and honours. He had served with credit in the Multan campaign in 1818 and had become known for his learning. In 1832 he received the charge at the Hills territory between the

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places of pilgrimage to residence in his own province after the Khalsa laid down their arms on the conclusion of the battles of Chillianwala and Gujrat.

Sikhs in the town were very few. They belonged to the lower middle class. The Chiefs of the Kapurthala family were Sikhs, no doubt, but they did not appear to very much care for the uplift of their community. Still, however, through the good offices of Bawa Parciuman Singh, Pleader, the local Singh Sabha was carrying on *Parchar* work in the district. The preacher, Bhai Labh Singh, now-a-days Head Granthi in the Golden Temple, Amritsar, was an old acquaintance of mine and belonged to my own district. In fact! he had helped me for some time in my propaganda work for the Sikhs there a decade and a half back. Both he and Munshi Jiwan Singh, as also Sardar Lachhman Singh of the Excise Department and Sardar Ganda Singh of the Vaccination Department, both lovable and esteemed youngmen, were very helpful in the effort to provide for the Sikh boys receiving instructions in the various local schools a well organized Khalsa Boarding House where they could

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Ravi and the Sutle] and held the appointment up to the teginring of 1844. He generally resided at Majitha or Amritsar where he was in charge of the Darbar Sahib. He was a mild and a benevolent man and, in the words of Lepel Griffin, "bears the character of being one of the best Governors that the Sikh rule produced." In the days of chaos and confusion after the death of Maharaja Sher Singh, Sardar Lehna Singh found his life and property insecure at the hands of minister Hira Singh and his all-powerful preceptor, Jalha. He, therefore, left the Punjab in the third week of March 1844 and took up residence at Benares to lead a peaceful life of retirement and study. The Sardar was at Calcutta on his way to Ganga Sagar when he was arrested and placed under surveillance on 23rd January, 1846, by the East India Company on the plea that his younger brother, Sardar Kanjodh Singh Majithia, had, during the first Anglo-Sikh War, set fire to the English cantonment of Ludhiana and inflicted a heavy loss on the British General Sir Harry Smith. He was, however, set at liberty on the conclusion of the war when he returned for a short time to the Punjab. But in January 1848 he left for Benares again. After the annexation, he spent a couple of years in the Punjab and died at Benares in 1854. His only son Sardar Dyal Singh succeeded him and died childless.—G.

assemble for morning and evening prayers. The herculean task of opening a Sikh High School there fell to the lot of other believers who, four years later, invited the Chief Khalsa Diwan to hold a session of the Sikh Educational Conference on which occasion the foundation of the Jullundur Khalsa High School was laid.\* Perhaps, it was during these days that Bhai Labh Singh was able to organize the Sikhs of Bundala and to see to the establishment of a High School in that village.

One of our boarders, Kaka Basant Singh, son of Sardar Boor Singh, a well-to-do Zaildar of Garhdiwala, in Hoshiarpur district, a boy of great promise, somehow, had become attached to me. I got from him a promise that when old enough he would establish Khalsa High Schools in his own district and thereby counteract, however partially, the efforts of the Arya Samaj to shake the faith of the Sikh Zamindars of the Hoshiarpur district. True to his promise, the dear boy prevailed upon his father to establish a High School in his village. He died young or else he would have carried the torch of knowledge far and wide. Later, about six years after retirement from Government service, I had to visit

\*The Doaba Khalsa High School, Jullundur City, was founded on 1st April, 1914, on the occasion of the seventh session of the Sikh Educational Conference held there. It owes a great deal to the liberal contributions of the Sikhs of Doaba and of other districts residing in Canada and the U.S.A. During 1913-14 their contributions amounted to over sixty thousand rupees. It is situated in a healthy locality outside the city, with extensive playgrounds covering an area of 25 acres. It was managed by a Committee of 15 members with Sardar Bahadur Gurbachan Singh of Alwalpur as its President. S. Chanan Singh, B.A., B.T., was its Headmaster (1941). The number of students on 21st November, 1941 stood at 460, vide Headmaster's letter No. 772 of that date).—G.

†Sardar Boor Singh was one of the original founders and generous donors of the school which was established as an Anglo-Vernacular Middle School on the 17th January, 1917. With the help of Sardar Bahadur Bishen Singh, I.E.S., the school was recognized and placed on the Grant-in-Aid list in 1918. The high classes were added in 1921, being recognized in 1923 with the Government grant. With the addition of Primary classes in 1926, the School became a full fledged High School.

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Garhdiwala, on the occasion of Gur-Sapatmi, festival when I was glad to see dear Basant Singh's father, still in health and vigour though over 70 years old. He was announcing another gift of land to the school for the extension of the playground when the news arrived of the birth of a son to him. There were great rejoicings in which I heartily joined. I felt as if dear Basant Singh had reincarnated to console his aged parents and greet me in his own abode.

When at Jullundur I was also indebted to Professor Jodh Singh, M.A., now Principal of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, for my visit to Mahilpur in the Hoshiarpur district. He was entrusted with the work of inspecting the Sikh Primary School for boys in that village in opposition to the local Arya Middle School. Somehow, the College authorities could not spare him. Being so near Mahilpur, I was asked to inspect the school and suggest necessary improvements. This opportunity for contributing my humble mite to the uplift of my co-religionists of the Hoshiarpur district I gladly availed of. Travelling by an *ekka*, as no railroad then connected Jullundur to Hoshiarpur, I arrived at the latter place late in the evening. Taking tea in the Gurdwara of the local Singh Sabha with my class-fellow and friend, Master Fateh Singh, I continued my journey in an *ekka* to Mahilpur, about 18 miles from Hoshiarpur. On the way I saw the village of Basi whose Pathan inhabitants had been made to pay heavily by the Khalsa under the leadership of *Sahibzada* Ajit Singh, the eldest son of Guru Govind Singh, for •

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According to the Headmaster's letter of 22nd November, 1941, the school had 19 teachers and 547 students. Sardar Sham Singh of Bhana, J district Hoshiarpur, was its Founder-President and Sardar Teja Singh, B.A., was its Headmaster (1941).

Regarding the part played by Sardar Boor Singh in the establishment and maintenance of the Garhdiwala Khalsa High School, the Headmaster wrote in his letter No. 1345 of 28th November, 1941: "Sardar Boor Singh is one of the founders of school. He was the Vice-President of the Managing Committee for 22 years from 1917 to 1939. He lent his own private building consisting of five rooms and a verandah free of rent to be used as school-house all these years. He also erected a class room at his own expense, spending Rs. 1800, in 1922. He has rendered very valuable service to this school during the last 24 years." —G.

their abducting the daughter of a Brahman of their village. I reached Jhahilpur after dark. Sardar (now Sardar Sahib) Balwant Singh, *Sitfedposh*, Manager of the Khalsa Primary School, was waiting for me. The following morning I examined all the classes and visited the local Arya Middle School. I found the Khalsa School well populated and well-staffed. The Arya School, though of higher status, was under untrained and poorly paid men. I predicted a great future for the Khalsa High School and am glad that it should have been vouchsafed to me to pay it a second visit after seventeen years when it had developed into a two-section high school\* under the same management and was housed in a big handsome building, on the site that I had selected on the occasion of my first visit, close to the Gurdwara sacred to the memory of *Sahibzada* Ajit Singh and in inspiring surroundings.

The district of Jullundur is a delightful tract of country, and, with the adjoining Hoshiarpur district, it is remembered in Government reports as the garden of the Punjab as so, indeed, it is. When in charge of schools in the Ludhiana district, a couple of years before, I had visited half of its schools from Rahon to Nakodar, Phillaur, Rurka Kalan, Banga and Bara-pind. The people appeared to me of stoic disposition, thrifty and intelligent. But there was no trace in them of the romance associated with the mighty legendary

\* The Khalsa High School Mahilpur was started on 1st August, 1909, with only one class, the Junior Special. With the devoted efforts of Sardar Sahib Sardar Balwant Singh, its Founder-President, and Sardar Harbhajan Singh, its Headmaster, the school occupied an enviable position in the province, for many years passing the largest number of boys in the Matriculation in the district as well as among the Khalsa schools of the province. According to the figures supplied by the Headmaster on 25th November, 1941, it had 12 classes with 18 sections and 664 students. 'Bhagat Lakshman Singh', writes the Headmaster, was the first among the official and non-official visitors. He gave most valuable suggestions which are up to this day remembered with gratitude. He continued to take interest in the welfare of the school and considered it as his own school.

(The school has since developed into a College and is being successfully " with Sant Hari Singh Kaharpuri as President of the Managing Committee.— G. November 13, 1964.)

*Danava* king Jalandhar, who subjugated the Devas and drove them out beyond the seas and founded an empire after his name. But just like Greece, which threw off foreign yoke under the spell of the inspiring strains of Lord Byron, Jullundur did make, about a decade and a half ago, a serious endeavour to throw off the British yoke when the first *Swaraj* Republic was established at Rurka Kalan with a huge broad-chested, broad-shouldered and a big-headed 6 or 7 footed Jat Sikh, Bachint Singh as its President, and the roar of my friend Lala Lajpat Rai, 'Lion of the Punjab,' as his admirers love to remember him, was believed to have shaken the very foundations of the great British Empire, and the cries of "*Vive Swaraj Republic*" from the lusty throats of about seventy thousand Congress nationalists rent the air. The *Swaraj Republic* was, however, a short-lived one. Its President, Bachint Singh, was arrested and jailed and the Congress Chief councillor sought safety in turning King's evidence. But who can know exactly what there is in the womb of futurity? Even now as I am writing these lines, January 17, 1937, I hear the skies above resound with the cries of *Freedom ! Freedom ! Freedom !* and stars in the political firmament reflect *Freedom ! Freedom ! Freedom ! Freedom !* And nightingales sing *Freedom ! Freedom ! Freedom !* But nobody asks and nobody answers if people who work on the soil, and toil and moil, and delve and spin, the so-called proletariat, have ever been free in this dear world of God !

## CHAPTER LI

### IN MY OWN HOME AGAIN

While at Jullundur I had all advantages that a man can desire—a beautiful *Kothi* on the Kartarpur Road to live in, placed at my disposal by the late Lala Dogar Mai, Advocate, the Headmaster, an old friend, who loved and respected me, and the staff and students all attached to me. But I was not happy, for my own surviving brother was ailing and dying in our home in Rawalpindi. I applied for ten days' casual leave, but because I was acting as Headmaster, the permanent incumbent being away at Hoshiarpur superintending Matriculation Centre there, my application was returned by the Divisional Inspector, Lala Sheo Lai, M.A., with the margin filled from end to end with the words written in bold characters "Leave not granted." It may be the worthy Inspector had passed this cruel order because he was expecting the visit of the Superintendent of the Director of Public Instruction's office, Mr. Hawkins, in connection with the inspection of a site for the new school building, and he did not want it to be known that both the Headmaster and the Secondmaster should be absent at one and the same time, but there was nothing to prevent him from putting in a word of regret that in view of the peculiar state of things he was unable to grant my request. Mr. Hawkins, however, who knew me and also knew my brother, greeted me kindly and enquired how we both were doing. I could not help saying that my brother was on his death-bed but I was not allowed to be with him. I observed further that a subordinate was, perhaps, not supposed to have any feelings. What the 'big' man, the worthy Inspector of Schools, thought of this my humble protest, I do not know; but Mr.

Hawkins, as he was being driven to the Railway Station, shouted from his back seat in the tonga, "You may go."

Thus I found myself in my home again with dear brother who passed away a week after my arrival. The Secondmaster, Lala Sohan Lai of Gujranwala, who was officiating for him, was confirmed as Headmaster. He knew me by reputation, and without my asking for it he got me appointed to the vacancy caused by his promotion so that I might be with my aged parents and the sons of my deceased brother—all minors. Even the usual formality of my returning to Jullundur to make over charge to the man officiating for me was dispensed with. Tall, but lean and thin, and a bit short of temper, he was sound both in his head and heart and he never missed an opportunity to do a good turn to those to whom he owed a duty. The Inspector of Schools, Khan Bahadur Maulavi Umr-ud-Din, M.A., was already known to me, for I had worked under him as District Inspector of Schools, Jhelum district. It was such a joy to again work under a man who really belonged more to the god-land above than to the grovelling denizens of this world of sin and suffering. He had it in his power to injure me, for there were occasions on which I blurted out remarks or opinions which would have seriously offended any man wanting Khan Bahadur Sahib's broad-mindedness and catholicity. Once when, after leaving Chakwal, we were riding through the Surla Valley, on our way to Dalwal where we had to inspect the local Mission High School, we noticed the beautiful mosque of a small village on the hill-side towards our right. What for its picturesque position and what for the neat and clean look of its domes and minarets the mosque wrested attention of the passers-by.

Involuntarily the Khan Bahadur exclaimed, "Ah, how very nice. These people must be very pious." "Nothing of the sort, Sir," observed, I. "Temples and mosques do not necessarily connote religiosity. Had this been the case there would have been no need for courts of law or for jails." This remark was quite uncalled for. But the good Khan Bahadur did not seem to notice it.

The morning following on the Khan Bahadur's enquiring if

there was any place of historical interest in the locality, we were escorted to the Haveli of the late Misar Beli Ram, the treasurer of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Emperor of the Punjab. It was a very high edifice— I did not go up-stairs, which I ought to have done as a matter of courtesy. But when a few minutes later I reached the uppermost storey on the express wishes of the Khan Bahadur he wondered why such an historical building did not interest me. "Undoubtedly it would have done, Sir," was my reply according to my wont, "but I was looking for an evidence as to whether the great owner of this great building had built any Gurdwara or *Serai* or any other edifice near by for public weal, but I saw none." On the way as we were riding along slowly, the Khan Bahadur turned to me and said smilingly, "God bless you, Bhagat Ji, but you are I not guarded in your speech." And God did bless me, for looking back on my career I clearly see that but for some such hidden hand my life's work would have foundered long ago, absolutely wanting as I have been in tact and wordly wisdom. j.

During the time of my service as District Inspector of Schools, Jhelum from December 1906 to, I believe, August 1908, and again [as Secondmaster in the Government High School, Rawalpindi, from June 1910 to March 1914, the late Khan Bahadur Maulavi Umr-ud-Din, M.A., of Phillaur in Jullundur district, was Inspector of Schools. I cherished his memory so much that when, after a decade and a half of retirement, I sojourned at Ludhiana with a relative, I took my late colleague, Sardar Harnam Singh, M.A., Headmaster, D.B. Middle School Dhandari, an ex-pupil of the Bhupindra Khalsa High School, Moga, with me to Phillaur with a view to visiting Khan Bahadur's tomb. Through the courtesy of the Khan Bahadur's son-in-law, we were able to find the graveyard. We placed our wreathes on the tomb. Our companion prayed on our behalf for the Khan Bahadur's soul, a prayer in which I heartily joined with eyes bedimmed with tears. This was a sort of sacred duty, of a return visit. I gratefully remembered how he had paid me a condolence visit accompanied with his whole Inspecting staff on the demise of my dear father. I was then Headmaster of the Government High School, Ambala, and was not working under him.

But Khan Bahadur Umr-ud-Din was a man of wide sympathies, far above formal courtesies and etiquette.

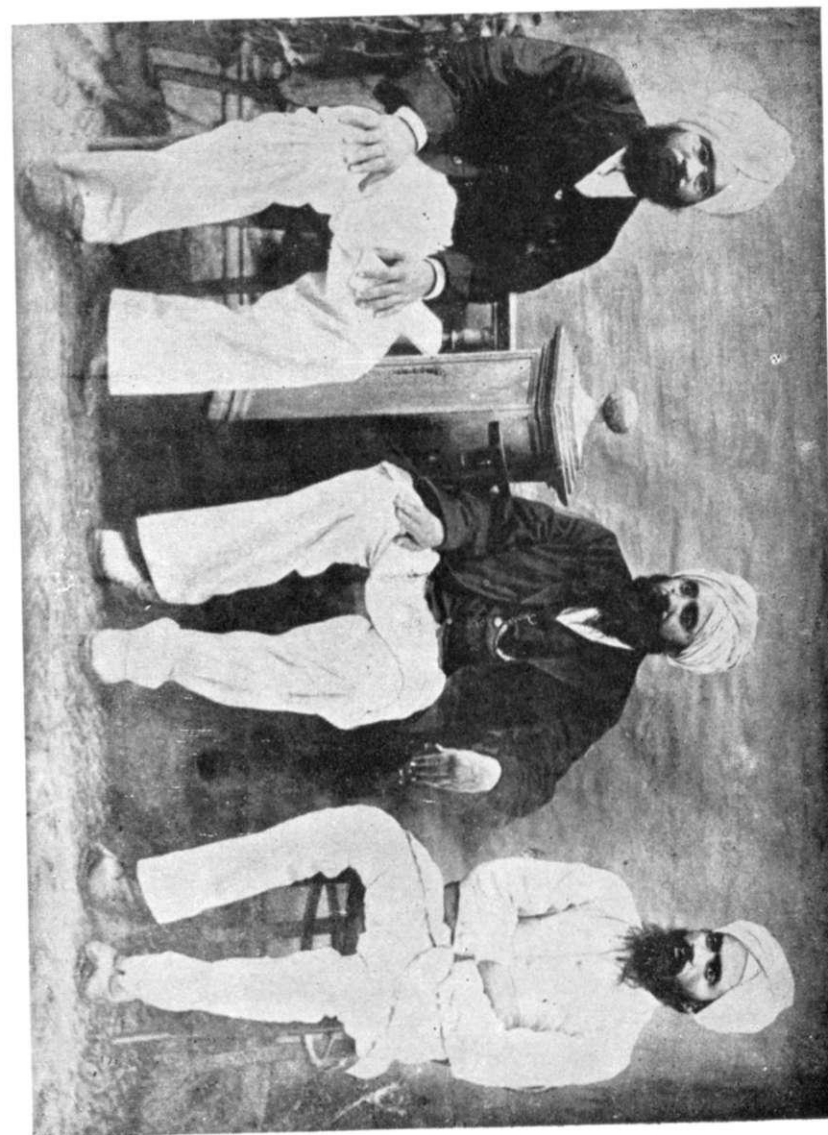
I have often heard of kinship in ideas and opinions, but I have not been able to account for one man precisely using the language of another without holding communion of any kind. This phenomena I noticed twice in my case. Once when my pupil, Professor Jodh Singh, M.A., who was travelling with me from Rawalpindi to Lahore, showed to me the draft of Sardar, now Sardar Sir, Jogendra Singh's presidential address that was to be read on the occasion of the first session of the Sikh Educational Conference at Lahore in the year 1908. To my great surprise, I found that the address contained not only a few words or lines but several paragraphs of my *Life of Guru Govind Singh*. The book had not yet been published. I had on my hand its first copy sent to me by the Tribune Press, Lahore, where it had been printed. My idea was to present it to a friend in Lahore. Jodh Singh snatched it from me saying that he would accuse his friend Sardar Jogendra Singh of plagiarism whom he was to meet that evening at the residence of Sardar Umrao Singh, elder brother of Sardar Sir Sundar Singh Majithia. This was done. There was a hearty laugh and the joke was very much enjoyed by the Sardar's numerous friends assembled there. The other occasion was during 1918 when I placed an order in the Order Book of the Ferozepur Government High School announcing the victory of the Allies in the Great European war and closed the school in honour of the event. When the school copy of the *Civil and Military Gazette*, Lahore, was received the following day, the reference to the War in my order was exactly in the terms used by the writer of the *Civil and Military Gazette*. My students and Senior Assistant Master noticed this resemblance with pleasing surprise. Whether this phenomenon was due to some psychic influence or was a mere accident I do not know; but this much I can say that it excited some curiosity at the time.

For full four years I trudged along on the path of life without ever giving thought to my further advancement. But this came unasked for and quite unexpectedly. One day as I was taking a

S. Amar Singh Vasu

Bhagat Lakshman Singh

Bhai Jodh Singh





section of the Matriculation class, the Headmaster, Lala Sohan Lai, noticed the Director, Mr. Godley, climbing the stairs which opened into my room. Introducing me to the Director, Lala Sohan Lai stepped into the room adjoining, perhaps to inform other members of the staff of their chief's arrival. "Did you compile the *Life of Guru Govind Singh* in English?" enquired Mr. Godley, and hearing from me in the affirmative he again observed: "I am afraid you were not well-advised in writing about Musalmans as you did." I was taken aback a bit and, forgetting who my interlocutor was, I asked in my turn, if he had read the whole book. "No," I am so sorry I did not." "Then, Sir," observed I, "You could not rightly form an opinion." Mr. Godley was accompanied by a low-placed subordinate like myself. He changed colour. I was just going to say something by way of a palliative, when the Headmaster, who was not far away, and had heard our conversation, came to my rescue. "Bhagat Ji, Sir", he was kind enough to put in, "only means that the book as a whole only incidently refers to Musalmans of the 10th Guru's time. Bhagat Ji is a well-known writer of cosmic sympathies." Mr. Godley smiled, remarking, "Oh, yes, I have heard him well-spoken of. I am glad I have met him." And then, looking at the board, he enquired what the class was doing. "This, Sir," replied I, "is the rendering into English of Baba Nanak's famous hymn which he recited addressing the worshippers of the god Jagannath in Orissa, who, with a bejeweled salver in their hands containing a few flowers and incense and a small lighted lamp of flour placed in it, circumambulated round the idol in thanksgiving, all the while fanning it, and enquired why he, Baba Nanak, was not doing so. The Baba said, "My God is in the heavens above with the skies to serve as a tray, the sun and moon as lights and the stars above as jewels and pearls, and the earth with its flowery groves in full splendour, revolving around Him ! The limitless music of spheres rings throughout His universe. What am I to sing of His glory, the Destroyer of Fear !" "Can they try it again ?" "Yes, Sir", cried out the boys. And they did it well. The Headmaster met Mr. Godley in the afternoon when he again spoke of my loving co-operation. Not much time

elapsed before I was transferred to Ambala as Headmaster. **M** will not be out of place here to remark how conscientious Mr. Godley was, true to the name he bore. I was confirmed, four years after—only after all the men, perhaps thirteen in number, whom I had superseded, had been given the next higher grade.

I have forgotten to add how my connection with principal Sikh families of note in my town cemented them into one compact body for Panthic service. Sardar Sewaram Singh, B.A..LL.B. Honorary Secretary of the Reception Committee of the first Sildf Educational Conference at Rawalpindi, had shifted to Mardan to practise there. I gladly accepted Sir Sundar Singh Majithia's request to take up the responsibility of carrying on the work of the Reception Committee. I had already seen that my young friend Sardar Hardit Singh, the elder son of Rai Bahadur Sardar Surjan Singh, was imbued with Sikh spirit, in which I was greatly helped by Munshi Hira Singh, the devoted old *Kardar* of the family. I now saw that Malik, afterwards Sardar Bahadur, Mohan Singh, my second cousin on mother-side, and his other three brothers were associated with Sikh activities. I approached Malik Mohan Singh with the request to accept Secretaryship of the Reception Committee which he gladly did. The approval of the Singh Sabha people, some of whom were for appointment to this important position of a veteran worker of their own, was easily obtained on my responsibility as an old worker.

Baba Ujagar Singh, the second son of the late Sir Baba Khem Singh Bedi from his third wife of Dhamiali, and his other two brothers Babas Kartar Singh and Hardit Singh, grandsons of my esteemed friend Sodhi Ajit Singh of Buttar in the Ferozepore district, were also made members of the Reception Committee, with Baba Ujagar Singh as Chairman. Similarly the co-operation of Chaudhri Ram Singh, grandson of the late Chaudhri Gurmukh Singh Sahni, a sincere old type Sikh and President of the defunct Khalsa Diwan Rawalpindi, under whose auspices the Khalsa A.V. Middle schools at Sukho and Kallar had been established, and *of* Kaka Harbans Singh, son of the late Rai Sahib Sant Singh, whose

liberal donations had enabled the distinguished Sant Nihal Singh of Thoha Khalsa to bring out a learned commentary on Jap Sahib, and last of all of the public spirited citizen, Rai Bahadur Sardar Boota Singh, C.I.E., was kindly offered and was thankfully accepted. And I gratefully remember how Saidar Boota Singh accommodated notable visitors in his palatial workshop mansions and sumptuously feasted the huge gatherings assembled on the occasion. It is impossible also to forget the loving co-operation of Sardar Amar Singh, P.E.S., Rtd., younger brother of Sardar Sahib Mohan Singh, my late old colleague of the Khalsa College Council. Little wonder, therefore, that the first Sikh Educational Conference at Rawalpindi, presided over by Sir Sardar Sundar Singh Majithia, should have been such a splendid success. The expenditure was not much, and the savings were devoted to the establishment of a Khalsa High School in the town, and thus my long cherished dream was at last realised.

Sardar Sundar Singh visited me again, when he came to Rawalpindi for laying the foundation stone of the School, in my old dilapidated residence, virtually the condemned octroi Chauki, away from the town, to which I had moved owing to plague in the city. Some how Rai Bahadur Boota Singh had come to know of Sardar Sundar Singh's visit to this humble place. He came to see him therewith me and remarked that it would have been better if Sardar Sundar Singh had been given afternoon tea in his handsomely furnished apartments. I humorously said that no place in 'Pindi' was big enough for the big Sardar and that places touched by the feet of the great people became great.

## CHAPTER LII

### IN THE SCHOOL AT AMBALA

My stay at Ambala was an uneventful one. The Inspector Rai Sahib Lala Jugal Kishore, was a very wary man of the let-me-alone type who would not go out of the fixed rut and did not expect others to act differently. The Deputy Commissioner, Mr. J. Miller I.C.S., was a generous-hearted man who loved to do good to all and sundry and was lovingly remembered by the mass of the people of the district as *Motianwala* (one who showered pearls as gifts). The Commissioner, Colonel Dallas, was a capable officer who understood his work and saw things himself. Little wonder, therefore, if all was quiet and peace under them.

The Government School in Ambala city was a small one in point of numbers; but its staff was good. One Hindu teacher, in charge of the Lower Primary classes in the city, who had put in over 20 years' service, was highly spoken of. I liked him and his work and wanted to advance him. But to the poor man's misfortune, his certificate of teachership was endorsed as "not satisfactory" simply because he was in my good books and the inspecting officer was my old friend Maulavi Abdul Ghani. The dear man had a stroke of paralysis as a result of which his hands always trembled and he was hardly able to move about. But his old disease, Hindu-Sikh-phobia had wrought havoc. He could not distinguish right from wrong. The questions set to the boys of the III lower class were far beyond the capacity of the children to answer. The action was probably unjust. The question papers together with the certificate of teachership, which had been returned without signature, were forwarded to the higher authorities, with the result that my dear friend had to eat the humble pie. He was transferred to Jhelum and was made to revert to the teaching line.

## CHAPTER LIII

### IN BHERA, FEROZEPUR AND RAWALPINDI

From Ambala I was posted at Bhera (Shahpur district), a place notorious for litigation and intrigue. But I had not much to do with people. The staff and students were amenable to discipline. The Inspector, Khalifa Imad-ud-Din, was, however, a difficult man to deal with. He insisted on the free admission of failed Matriculates of whom there were about thirty. I took in all the boys who had failed in two subjects, but those who had failed in more than two subjects I refused to have in my Matriculation class. He enquired under which section of the Education Code I would justify my action. My reply was that my authority was the unwritten rules according to which I was responsible for the Matriculation results. This served as a quietus, but only for the time being. When the time for annual increment to my salary came, he withheld it on the plea that he was not bound to agree to such an automatic increase. Against this decision, I appealed to the Director of Public Instruction, who decided the case in my favour. I had been in charge of the Bhera school only for four months. Goodness knows how many pin-pricks were in store for me from Khalifa Sahib who, by the by, happened to be a son of my own teacher, Khalifa Hamid-ud-Din with whom I had read in the Municipal Board High School, Lahore, during the early eighties. But I did not care to tell him of this old tie. It could have no effect on the erstwhile Reporter on Books who had taken umbrage on my referring to Muslim atrocities in my *Life of Guru Govind Singh* and had recommended the rejection of Lala Harkishan Lai's request for the purchase of some copies for

school and college libraries. But stranger and stronger enemies—hosts of mosquitoes—which invaded my abode from their haunts in the low-lying dirty fields and kept me awake whole nights, compelled me to seek shelter in a cleaner place. My request was kindly accepted and I was placed in charge of the Government High School at Ferozepur.

But before I record events subsequent to my arrival at Ferozepur, I think it will not be out of place to bear witness to the political sagacity of Maharaja Sir Bhupindra Singh of Patiala in holding the third anniversary of the Great European War in his capital. Representative Sikhs from all over the Punjab, the North West Frontier and Delhi provinces were invited. I too was one of such persons. I halted at Lahore to see my friend, Mr. Sundar Singh Bhatia, editor of the *Tribune* who, on learning of my mission, requested me to represent the *Tribune* at the Durbar His Highness was holding. I gladly accepted the offer and reported proceedings of the Durbar as special correspondent of the *Tribune*. Prayers were offered at the Durbar for the victory of the Allies. Telegraphic messages were received from the Commander-in-Chief and the Viceroy thanking His Highness as Chief head of the brave Sikh community for his sympathy for the cause of the Allies. In acting as he did, His Highness loyally carried out the traditional policy of the elders of the Singh Sabha movement who believed comradeship with the Britishers was the chief *sine qua non* of their political creed. Nobody could even dream at that time that the silken ties of love and friendship that bound the Sikhs and the Britishers would break asunder as a result of the non-co-operation programme of Mahatma Gandhi and the injudicious action of a few men in the Gurdwara Reform Movement.

Much of the success in the Ferozepur Government High School, of which I was Headmaster from 1916 to 1918, was due to the Inspector, Colonel W.T. Wright's appreciative references of my work and his support in the internal administration of the school. And it was Colonel Wright again whose favourable reports not only obtained me successive extensions, but also actually resulted in my promotion to the Provincial Service in Rs. 250-25-500 grade. And when later, as Director of Public Instruction, Punjab, he visited

Rawalpindi Government School, then under my charge, he told me in so many words that he was sorry I was not young enough to fully profit from the high position to which I had been recently elevated and retire on a decent pension. I gratefully remarked that it was impossible for youth to come back to me, but the memory of his treatment would always vivify me and make me feel young again.

As an instance how he had sought to advance me, I might mention here one incident. Mr. Balak Ram Kapur, Assistant teacher in the Ambala Government High School, several times suggested my trying for promotion to Provincial Service. I laughed at the suggestion and considered it a mad idea, for I was low in the Subordinate Service and I did not think the authorities would consider such a request. Three years after when I was in charge of the Ferozepur school the same colleague of mine was transferred to work under me. He then succeeded in making me seriously entertain the idea, and, to make sure that I should keep his counsel, he accompanied me to the P. W. D. bungalow in the cantonment where Colonel Wright was staying in connection with his annual visit. My friend Sayyad Maqbul Shah, then Joint Inspector, was sitting with him and doing the work of an amanuensis and filling in School Log Books. I asked for a private interview and when it was granted, I hesitatingly communicated to the Inspector my friend's mad suggestion. After a playful banter Colonel Wright told me gravely if there was any one he knew who deserved a special lift of this sort it was I. And he added, he was thankful to the author of the 'mad' suggestion. What followed would look like a fairy tale. Heretofore, thanks to Colonel Wright's exaggerated opinion of me, any number of Headmasters of the Jullundur Division visited me to see how I looked. It was now the turn of the new Director, Mr. Richey, to specially motor from Lahore to see me. On his return to Lahore he noted down my name for promotion to the Provincial Educational Service. And what is more, he

transferred me to Rawalpindi, my home, so that I might complete my service and retire from there.

These were the days of the Great European War. The great

Generals of European nations were out to break each other's heads. I had to wage a war against the mosquitoes which the filth in the neighbouring fields produced in abundance and which hovered over the school compound. Once in search of munition to drive out the enemy, I visited a Mahar, a great Musalman land-lord, in his garden outside the town and asked him to be good enough to let me have a few flower plants for the school garden. The good Mahar was very obliging and, as President Wilson turned the scales in the Great European War by placing the resources of the mighty United States of America at the disposal of the Allies in Europe, my Mahar ally supplied me with a regular cartload of flower plants to enable me to successfully fight the fight that I was fighting. The School chaprasi accompanied the cart and I was escorted home by the Mahar's little boy, reading in the 3rd lower class. On the way the boy enquired if I would like to see a Sikh girls school close by and wonderingly observed how loads of money had been spent in the shape of buildings in the dirtiest part of the town. The child's precocity and intelligence startled me. I drew him towards me and caressed and blessed him. A keen sight and an awakened intellect are gifts which the great God in his goodness has not blessed me with. I have walked through life absent-mindedly with eyes closed as it were. I had seen the girls school, the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala, more than once. But it was only when the Mahar child drew my attention to that, it dawned on me that once on the occasion of my visit I had noticed that the building of the Vidyala looked like a small isle in a sea of sewage waters. The wan and pallid looks of the scholars had startled me, but as was my wont I soon forgot all about it. I wonder if the attention of my esteemed friend, Bhai Takhat Singh/

\*Bhai Takht Singh, son of Sardar Dewa Singh of Bharowal (Ludhiana district), was born at Ferozepore in 1870. After completing his education at the Oriental College, Lahore, under Bhai Gurmukh Singh, the well known Sikh leader and organizer of the Singh Sabha movement, he started an open-air co-educational institution at Ferozepur. This was raised in 1892 to be the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala devoted to the education of girls. In this he was

{Continued on the next page.

the founder of the Vidyala has ever been drawn towards his wrong choice of the site on which the building of his great institution stands. He is a very good soul indeed, and is rightly honoured by the name of *Zinda Shahid* (living martyr). It is impossible to suppose that he ever imagined that the nauseating sewage vapours would work havoc on the health of the poor scholars from day to day.

There was another *Zinda Shahid* in the town of Rawalpindi, Qazi Gauhar AH. He was a Reader to the Deputy Commissioner. He had seen Raghu Nath Mandir in Rai Bahadur Sardar Sujana Singh's garden. The Mandir is a work of art, beautifully situated, a really delightful place for Hindu worshippers. Why should not the Muslim faithful, likewise, have a stately *Masjid* of their own befitting the name and position of their great community? The noble idea materialized as soon as it was conceived. Who does not know the might and influence of mighty Readers of mighty District Magistrates? Acres of beautifully situated lands could be had for the mere asking; but the good Qazi Sahib chose a low-lying place near a big nullah carrying sewage waters of an extremely congested part of the town situated just in the vicinity of Raghunath Mandir. Of course, it did not matter if the filling of the low-lying land should cost fabulous amount of money. The aim was to out-rival the Sikh millionaire, to afford opportunities for a trial of strength in rending the sky with shouts of *Allahu-Akbar* on one side and of those of *Sat Sri Akal* and *Sita Ram Ki Jai* on the other, and this was gained. I am sure it never occurred to the good Qazi Sahib that the structure he was putting up would, when he came to be gathered to his fathers, become, a rendezvous

*Continued from the last page.]*

helped by his devoted wife, Bibi Harnam Kaur. Bhai Takht Singh was also the founder of Bhai Ditt Singh Library with about five thousand books and manuscripts on the history and religion of the Sikhs. He died on December 18, 1937. His son Sardar Gurbakhsh Singh is now (December 1964) the manager of the Sikh Kanya Mahavidyala and his second daughter, Bibi Gurbakhsh Kaur (Mrs. Pampal Singh), M.A., is Deputy Directress, Public Instruction, Panjab.—G.

for people of a school of thought which lived on pandering to popular prejudices. I have remembered him with the honoured name of *Zinda Shahid* for he lived and died for Islam. He relinquished his honoured position under government, perhaps, long before he was due to retire. He gave up his abode in his neat and clean beautiful village Qazian and decided to reside in his *Kothi* on the Circular Road in Rawalpindi city as a *Faqir*, unmindful of the city's dust and dirt, to see through the completion of the mosque without ever giving one thought, if I guess correctly, to keep it under his own control. He never knew that the mosque or, as it was later named, Juma Masjid, would pass into the hands of men who have appeared like comets on the Rawalpindi sky, an omen which bodes ill for all concerned.

I did not take my transfer kindly for my old friend Mr. Sayyad Maqbul Shah was then in charge of the Rawalpindi Division. But there was no help to it. Orders were orders and had to be obeyed. On the way I halted at Lahore and saw Mr. Richey in his office. On being asked why I looked sad, I plainly told him that my relations with Sayyad Maqbul Shah were anything but good and I considered it unfortunate to have to serve under him. Mr. Wyatt, Principal, Central Training College, Lahore, then entered the room, with some official papers upon which Mr. Richey dismissed me with the remark, "Good bye, Maqbul Shah will not do anything." It was long after that I understood the significance of these words. Whenever Mr. Sayyad Maqbul Shah met Mr. Richey in his office in Lahore, the latter accosted him with some such remark. "Any news about Bhagat Lakshman Singh? I hope he is doing well!" Personally Mr. Maqbul Shah was an extremely polite man and sweet like honey. After seeing Mr. Richey, his attitude towards me underwent a marked change. He behaved as if he was my own loving brother. He lived in the office a furlong from my school and every evening when at headquarters he sent for me so that I might bear him company in his evening walks. Once he told me, in so many words, that when in camp he missed me very much. This was very flattering to me indeed. I took up residence in the uppermost room of the school building with a leaky roof and

## H IN RAWALPINDI

imposed to the sun and wind so that I might be near him. I was rewarded by a confidential report to the Director that I was occupying a school room without permission. A Muslim employee of the Public Works Department once came and measured my room, but he did not tell me why he was doing so. It was only after seven months' stay in the room that I received a letter from the Director, Public Instruction, asking me to quit the room and pay Rs. 70/- as rent, viz., Rs. 10/- per mensem. This was very fine indeed; but what was still finer was that Sayyad Maqbul Shah was not asked to pay anything for a set of office rooms that he had been occupying for months. When, later, I enquired, from the Director, Colonel Wright, the reason of this differential treatment he smiled and turned the topic. I also learnt that Sayyad Sahib all the while that he was in Rawalpindi Division had been writing to the Director, Public Instruction, that Mr. Pran Nath, a Bengali Christian, who was District Inspector of Schools, Rawalpindi, should not be transferred when the new scheme came into operation, thus indirectly suggesting the cancellation of my nomination to this position. This recommendation was, however, not heeded to. I also came to know that he had been trying to injure me in other ways in an underhand manner, but he failed. And it was not a small relief to me when he was transferred to Lahore. The new Inspector, Mr. D. Reynell, M.A., was an upright Englishman of high principles, but he was not sufficiently strong to give battle to the intriguing clique that his predecessor Sayyad Maqbul Shah had left behind. And so when I had to take up my new duties as district Inspector of Schools, on promotion to the Provincial Service, I had to fight this clique single-handed. I found that my esteemed friend, Sayyad Maqbul Shah, though absent in body, was ubiquitous in spirit. The whole period of his service in the Rawalpindi Division was a veritable crusade against Hindus and Sikhs. His annual reports were a long wail, loud cry in fact, over the sad plight of the Muslim population of the Division, as a result of their educational exploitation by both Hindus and Sikhs. Now this was absolutely far from the truth. I happened to be the first person who started Khalsa schools in the Rawalpindi district. Hindus

and Sikhs who interested themselves in this work entered the field later. I can say that no base motive impelled me in first conceiving and then in carrying out the idea of the educational uplift of the ilaqa, however, partially. And as I happen to know most of the other Sikh and Hindu educationists in the Rawalpindi Division I am in a position to say that they were all impelled by the noblest of motives. The majority of the Sukho and Kallar Khalsa school students were Musalmans, and I loved them as if they were my own children. The thought of converting them and the Hindu boys to the Sikh creed never entered my mind. The whole atmosphere of my schools was free from all religious bias. Extracts from Sikh scriptures were taught merely to provoke thought and inspire. No lectures or disputations were allowed. Of course, the Hindu and Sikh money-lenders in the Rawalpindi Division were not very scrupulous in their dealings with the Musalman rural population, but neither Lala Hans Raj Sahni, President of the Rawalpindi D.A.-V. High School, nor I had anything to do with money-lenders, whether Hindus or Sikhs. Mr. Thorburn, Commissioner of the Rawalpindi Division, who had sponsored the Land-Alienation Act had failed to realise the patent truth that the indebtedness of the Musalmans was mostly due to their want of thrift and their facilities in having any number of wives and begetting children from them. But I am digressing. If Sayyad Maqbul Shah was anti-Hindu and anti-Sikh, his successor Mr. Khurshid Ahmad surpassed him in his hatred of Hindus and Sikhs. In his quinquennial report he made himself ridiculous by propounding theories of the Indian Muslims as a race. For instance he remarked in all seriousness that as a *Lala*, meaning a Hindu, fought shy of riding a horse, he did not make a good officer. The clever civilian British District and Divisional officers must have laughed in their sleeves at their weaving of this yarn with a view to throwing dust into their eyes. They cannot be unaware of the fact that most of the Indian Musalmans are descendants of low caste converts to Islam and that the descendants of the Musalman conquerors from the west or of high caste converts from amongst the Hindus were as conspicuous in their hatred for their low-caste co-religionists as

Hindus and Sikhs were towards low-caste people in their own ranks. I happen to be a native of the part of the country peopled mostly by Musalmans and can vouch for the truth that so far as low-caste people among them are concerned they fare as badly at their hands as Hindus or Sikh low-caste men do among high-caste Hindus and Sikhs.

Let me here relate a small story in this connection. Once as I left Narali village, in the Rawalpindi district, in connection with the annual inspection of schools and was proceeding to Kuntrila, I arrived at a spot from where the road spread into two directions and did not know which way to take. By chance I espied a young man, about 25 years of age, decently clad, following me. I asked him which of the paths would take me to Kuntrila sooner. At his direction I turned my horse to the path indicated. He kept on following me. As I entered a village on the way I enquired from the senior most of the urchins playing there if I was on the right road to Kuntrila. "No, Sardar Ji", said my half-clad unwashed interlocutor, "I shall lead you out of the village to the right path." But I protested that my friend, pointing to my companion, said differently. "Don't believe that *Kammi* (low-caste)," was the fearless blunt reply. I was taken aback. My companion slunk off uncomplainingly as if nothing had happened. "And what are you, my dear lad?" observed I turning towards my new guide. "I am a *Saoo* (blue-blooded)," was the proud reply. "Oh! I see, thank you", said I, "you are truly an intelligent lad for your years?" and then I wended my way. The speaker was a well-born peasant child of Musalman persuasion who belonged to the Rawalpindi district. The *Kammi* was also a Musalman. The community of belief apparently had failed to inspire brotherly feelings in the breasts of Rawalpindi Musalmans. This is a stern truth and it truly indicates the mental attitude of the high-caste Musalmans of Rawalpindi. And that this belief is general and not of a recent origin will be borne out by another story pertaining to the days of my boyhood.

Sheikh Sandhe Khan was a prominent old Rais and Honorary Magistrate of Lahore. I was a close friend of his only son. I often

accompanied my friend to his house. Once, as I was sitting in the Diwankhana, Sheikh Sahib remarked, inadvertently, in my belief, that the Britishers were a low people, because they patronized low-class people and showed no preference to the sons of the Indian gentry. The truth was otherwise which the good Sheikh Sahib seemed to have lost sight of. The British officers as practical statesmen selected men for administrative posts, who had some smattering of knowledge and did not bother themselves as to what caste or creed or rank in society their Indian subordinates belonged.

Thus the fact remains that there are any number of Musalmans who believe in castes and clans and who look down on certain classes of their co-religionists with the same intensity as Hindus and Sikhs do. It was, therefore, absurd on the part of Maulavi Khurshid Ahmad to claim a special high stamina for all his co-religionists disregarding their differences of blood, though in this there is no doubt that, thanks to the far-sighted polity of the great prophet Muhammad, his religious injunctions to his followers in the matter of their treatment of their less favoured brethren do tend very considerably to soften down the acerbity of their temper and even to extend a helping hand to them at times. Despite this apparent advantage of the Muslim people, personal factor has always played a prominent part in the efforts of brave and enterprising individuals to acquire paramountcy over their fellow-men and to devise plans to render them incapable of offering resistance for all time. If high caste Hindus have kept down the low-caste men among them, believed to be descendants of the conquered races, and have done everything to debase them and destroy their sense of self-respect, the Muslims of one race have employed similar means to keep down other Muslim races. Even men of the same race have fought fights to death amongst themselves and have blinded, maimed and murdered them. The Musalman rule in India would serve as an example. It was not a rule of a succession of potentates belonging to one and the same dynasty, but that of any number of dynasties. And the rulers of the last dynasty with the exception of the first six were puppets whom their designing ministers used as pawns in their games. Hence for any Musalman to claim political super-

iority merely on account of his belonging to the Muslim creed is as false and pure and simple, a travesty of facts.

But presumably it did not appear as much to Mian Fazl-i-Husain, the man in power those days. He was a man of parts himself, no doubt. But I have reasons to believe that much of the yarn supplied to him to becloud the educational atmosphere of his time was woven by Sayyad Maqbul Shah with his hereditary skill and was, later, rinsed and refined by his henchman, Maulavi Khurshid Ahmad. Mian Sahib was Education Minister himself. He rewarded Sayyad Maqbul Shah by creating for him a new post of Inspector of Vernacular Education with headquarters at Lahore. The redoubtable Maulavi Khurshid Ahmad was more lucky. He was worn out and consumptive and would have soon sung his swan song, but his resourceful patron created a snug post for him in connection with the Red Cross Society which, true to its traditional generosity, ensconced him in its bosom.

But I am again digressing. I was going to say that the Muslim Inspectorate in Rawalpindi had vitiated the whole educational atmosphere. As a result thereof, British civil officers had come to look upon Sikh enterprise in education with disfavour and they readily lent ears to complaints against the managements of the Khalsa schools. The Khalsa High School at Kallar was particularly an eye-sore in official eye. Before I took charge there was a proposal under consideration to raise the District Board Anglo-Vernacular Middle School there to the status of a High School. My predecessor, a Bengali Christian, had actually reported that the Khalsa School was not only a menace to the prosperity of the preponderating Muslim population but to the British rule itself. I strongly controverted these allegations and opposed the proposal. The proper course, said I, was to proceed against the Khalsa School departmentally if its management was found tripping, but to incur no further pecuniary responsibilities in raising the status of the District Board School was a sheer waste. It was like cutting the nose of the District Board to spite the local Khalsa School people. And I pointed out that instead of raising the status of the Kallar District Board School, the District Board funds could be invested in



opening a good school in any other part of the district where there was already no school of any kind for Kallar was not the only place which was surrounded by Musalman population, but the whole district was practically a Musalman district. It so happened that in all Khalsa schools Musalmans far out-numbered Sikhs and Hindus. Really Sikhs were engaged in an altruistic work like Christian missionaries. The British civilian officers, as a rule, are very shrewd, level-headed people. But, as already observed, the vitiated political atmosphere had blurred their vision. They could not see things in their proper light. They at once took me to be an out-and-out supporter of Sikh institutions and unfriendly to Muslim interests, which was not a fact. It is true I objected to the recommendation of a grant of something like ninety thousand rupees for the Islamia High School building in Gujarkhan because its High department had not yet been recognized. I also proposed the transfer of the Muslim Headmaster of Vernacular Middle School because he, along with his brother, who was also a Headmaster, was in the habit of absenting himself without leave. But this was in the interests of the institutions themselves. Bogus telegrams and deputations, however, were believed as gospel truth and in almost every case orders already passed were rescinded.

In vain did I invite attention to the absolutely wrong policy that was being followed disregarding the financial position of the District Board, bordering on bankruptcy. In a private note to my esteemed friend Hon'ble Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, then Revenue member of the Punjab Government, which he inadvertently forwarded in original to the Hon'ble Mian Fazl-i-Husain, Education Minister, I thoroughly exposed the absolutely wrong policy pursued by the District officers based on prejudiced reports from my predecessor just to let him have an idea of how Sikh enterprise in education was discountered. Mian Sahib, I know, read the representation, but I doubt if he was impressed in the least by what I stated. Public funds continued to be wasted by sheer pique. If he moulded the policy of the Government, his co-adjutors like Khan Bahadur Sayyad Maqbul Shah, Khan Bahadur Maulavi Khurshid Ahmad Khan, I have reasons to believe, moulded Mian Sahib's policy, for

that he did was virtually done by them. He only gave their recommendations the impress of his own name. But it matters little after all. The same thing is being done all the world over. The qualms of conscience only trouble simpletons. Finding my further stay in my own district useless, I applied for and obtained transfer to Ludhiana in the same capacity.

It so happened that I never had any trouble with European Educational officers from Directors down to Inspectors. In fact my relations with most of them were extremely cordial and my heart invariably goes out to them when I am reminded of them. Even the European District Magistrates and the Assistant Commissioners with whom it fell to my lot to co-operate, even those with whom I seriously differed, had sterling qualities which wrenched admiration from me. It is true they, too, lost their balance of mind when they smelt an opposition to the policy they pursued, but the methods they adopted to counteract this opposition were generally straight. Even in their confidential reports they very rarely resorted to subterfuge of any kind.

## CHAPTER LIV

## TRANSFER TO LUDHIANA

My transfer to Ludhiana was as good as useless to me. The Sikh members of the District Board there, like their kith and kin, elsewhere, badly lacked public spirit and co-operating capacity. Most of them were mere noodles and the few who possessed some intelligence played into the hands of their Secretary, an Anglo-Indian, who knew how to keep them quiet. Only a few months were left in my retirement. And I am thankful th.it they passed without any event worth recording, except that in a way I was able to help the Anglo-Sanskrit Public High School at Khanna which was under a cloud. The contributors were mostly Sikhs and the country surrounding was populated by Sikhs, but the Sikhs were mostly a benighted lot, unable to understand and guard <sup>t</sup>^H interests. At Khanna proper there was not one Sikh worth the name. I could see through the Arya Samajist game of converting the school eventually into an Arya Samajist institution, as they did last year (1933), despite the fruitless efforts of the Sikhs to prevent this being done. But there could be no help to it. Not only did I not oppose the Arya Samajist management, but, I actually sought to help them. For this there was a reason. By a mere chance my eyes fell on the remarks in the School Log Book from the pen of the Musalman Tehsildar of Samrala from which it appeared that an impression had gained ground that the school was a hot-bed of sedition. I made sifting enquiries and found that there was no ground for such an assumption. True, the Headmaster was a young enthusiast who in his college days at Lahore might have attended some political demonstrations, but he was now

occupying a responsible position and was putting in good work. The instructional condition of the school was satisfactory and in point of number it left nothing to be desired. My sympathies [were involuntarily attracted towards the institution and I thought the best thing that I could do was to recommend it for being placed on the list of aided institutions.

What became of my recommendations I do not know, for soon after I went on leave preparatory to retirement. Very probably the institution continued to suffer from sinister influences like any number of other Sikh and Hindu institutions throughout the Punjab.

The last meeting of the District Board Ludhiana which I attended as an official member was a painful surprise to me. Sardar Sahib Mehar Singh of Mohi moved a resolution that the Director, Public Instruction, Punjab, be requested to appoint after my retirement an Agriculturist as a District Inspector of Schools even though he might be a Muhammadan. The Deputy Commissioner, Mr. Hilton, was in the chair. The resolution was passed unanimously. I had heard years back of a crazy Sikh Vakil of Lahore propounding the idea that Jats alone were Sikhs and that others were in name only. But I could never have imagined that the craze would assume the proportions it had done. But it was now that I learnt that the village of Mohi in the Ludhiana district was the principal citadel in Malwa ilaqa wherefrom this new political stunt, viz., of uniting all Jats, whether Hindus, Musalmans or Sikhs, for the purpose of waging an eternal war against the non-Jat population of the province, who were believed to be responsible for all the ills of the agriculturists, was started. Who engineered this stunt, I am not aware, but I could at once see that the movement boded ill for both agriculturists and non-agriculturists of the province. Subsequently I learnt that Sardar Mehar Singh, like Chaudhri Chhotu Ram of Rohtak, was a political disciple of Mian Sir Fazl-i-Husain and that he was only a small pawn in the game. Nevertheless it pained me exceedingly to see that Sikh Jats should have fallen into such a trap and that even a person of Sardar Mangal Singh M.L.A.'s intelligence should have lent the use of the columns

of the *A kali* newspaper, when he was its editor, for Chaudb. Chhotu Ram's Quixotic ideas on this question. One's heart breaks at the sight of even well-educated Hindus and Sikhs stultifying their energies in a hopeless cause, the success of which can only mean their political suicide. No Indian Musalman can in his heart of hearts assign to a non-Muslim the place which a Muslim occupies, Maulana Muhammad AH truly interpreted the Muslim mind when he said that in his estimation even the worst Musalman was better than a Gandhi.

## CHAPTER LV

### VISIT TO ANANDPUR - MY WORK AT MOGA

It is difficult to express the ecstasy I felt when I made over charge to an assistant of mine and proceeded on leave preparatory to retirement. It was as if a load was lifted from my mind. A carefree life is really a joy, elevating, rejuvenating and inspiring. The first use I made of this freedom was to visit a relative in Muradabad (United Provinces). The whole intervening tract of land between Saharanpur and Muradabad was parched under the scorching heat of June. No prosperous town or village was visible. Stray mud huts with thatched roofs here and there only indicated the appalling poverty of the people who had the misfortune to work on the soil. It was really a relief when a couple of days after I returned to my own province of life and vigour. Alighting at Sirhind, which still seemed to be under a curse, I proceeded to Anandpur via Chamkaur and Rupar. The Gurdwara at Chamkaur was now under the management of neo-Akalis. I greatly missed my friend the late Sardar Bir Singh, Overseer, who had put heart and soul into the restoration of the Chamkaur's Gurdwara to its old historic importance as the seat of the martyrdom of *Sahibzadas* Ajit Singh and Jhujhar Singh. And I was grateful to learn that "ie amenities and benefactions sanctioned at my request by the Council of Regency, during the days of minority of Maharaja Bhupindra Singh, were still available. My friend Hon'ble Sardar

Sir Jogendra Singh,\* Minister of Agriculture, Punjab Government was then President of the Council of Regency. He must be equally glad that it should have been vouchsafed to him to do this service to the Gurdwara.

Rupar, too, is an historic place. One wonders how its inhabitants could have the heart to offer the site of a brick-kiln to our saviour, Guru Govind Singh, for encampment on his escape from the Sirsa floods. The Gurdwara in the town appeared to be well attended. I stopped there only for the night. Next morning I procured a bullock cart and started for Anandpur. The jolting of

\*Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh was a well known figure in the Indian politics and one of the few worthy representatives of the old Sikhs. His ancestor Sardar Sujjan Singh was a member of the Sukkarchakkia Misal, of which the founder was Sardar Charhat Singh Sukkarchakkia, grandfather of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Sardar Punjab Singh, Sir Jogendra Singh's grandfather, was a distinguished *Ghorcharha* soldier in the service of the Maharaja. He rendered yeoman's service during the mutiny of 1858 and was rewarded with a grant of land in the Kheri district of Oudh, in addition to seven hundred acres in *Rakh* Sukkarchak, Tehsil Tarn Taran, district Amritsar. Punjab Singh's son Sardar Jwala Singh purchased fourteen villages in the Kheri district, and greatly added to the family property in the ancestral village of Rasulpur in the Amritsar district.

Sardar Jogendra Singh born in 1877 was the second son of Sardar Jwala Singh. He became the head of the family after the death of his elder brother Sardar Sant Singh in 1913. He was connected by marriage with the Atariwala Sardars. By virtue of his rare literary attainments, he rose to eminence in the first decade of the present century and was editor of the *East and West*. He represented the Sikh community in the Council of State and was appointed Home Minister of the Patiala State in 1910, and ultimately rose to the position of the President of the Council of Regency. During 1926-1937, he was Minister for Agriculture in the Punjab. It was during his regime that the Mandi Hydro-Electric Scheme came to fruition and the town of Jogindranagar was named after him. He was elected President of the Sikh Educational Conference four times and served on many a Government Committee. He was one of the founders of the Khalsa Defence League of India which aimed at helping the Government in the defence of India and advancing the interests of the Sikhs in the Indian Army.—G.

the cart as it passed upwards of 16 miles of riverain tracts shook my whole frame. It was only when I crossed the accursed Sirsa, whose waters had carried away the Saviour's valuable luggage, a couple of centuries previous, and had separated his mother, wife and sons, but which was then dry, that I could get a glass of drinking water from a human habitation. From that place or rather from Kiratpur Gurdwara of many sacred memories which stood on a plateau towards the north the road led through a fertile tract. Arriving at my destination I forgot all the discomforts of the journey. The very first object which caught my eye was the Keshgarh Gurdwara, the domes and cupolas of which reflected the parting glory of the setting sun far and wide. And as I climbed upstairs and stepped inside it seemed as if the portals of *Sach-Khand* (the Abode of the True) itself had been flung open to receive me. Inside all was love and harmony. The congregation was not large, for Sikhs there are very few. There was no trace of greed or corruption. The following morning through the courtesy of my host, Sodhi Kishan Singh, a leading *Rais*, I was enabled to visit all the Gurdwaras in the locality. I saw the Saviour's place of residence, an unpretentious building where his four sons were born and brought up. I saw the hill from where his arrows wrought havoc on the invading Mughal and Rajput hordes below. I also saw the ruins of the old fort from within which for months together the Khalsa soldiery made sorties during the last great battle and made short shrift of the besieging hosts. And I marvelled at the wisdom and foresight which had led Guru Tegh Bahadur to select this site for his retreat and the strategy of his son, the great Guru Govind Singh, in fortifying it. It was a pity, however, to notice that the small township of Anandpur was almost a ruin. The Sodhi families were declining in influence and their great mansions were mostly in dilapidated condition for want of repairs. For want of business of any kind the Hindu shopkeepers were shifting to other places in search of work. The only progressive institution was Sodhi Gurbachan Singh Khalsa High School founded by Mata Raj

Devi, in memory of her only young son.\* The compound of the school, a vast expanse of verdure, was a marvel indeed and will lend an eternal charm to the institution. Before her death which took place a few years back she transferred the control of the school to the Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar, which has run it successfully. Anandpur is the Medina of the great Khalsa community which owes it a duty, the neglect of which is bound to seriously affect its own growth and strength. The great Maharaja Ranjit Singh did a yeoman's service to the place by providing stately edifices for worship despite his numerous distractions. It is time the present-day followers of the illustrious founder of the Panth gave a serious thought to the rehabilitation of this most important place of worship. There is no reason why a Sikh syndicate should not be able to establish business concerns in the locality and open communication with Kawanshahr in Jullundur district on one side and with Rupar in the Ambala district on the other. Labour, both skilled and unskilled, is very cheap in that part of the country.

From this time forward, i.e., June 1921, to the end of the following year I have nothing very particularly to record except that the neo-Akali agitation against Government was increasing in volume and intensity. I watched the movement as an outsider. Had I been in the movement the trend of events might have been

\*As referred to in text above, The Sodhi Gurbachan Singh Khalsa High School, Anandpur is the gift of Mata Raj Devi (died, March 1931), the widow of Sodhi Gajindar Singh of Bari Sardar of Anandpur, in memory of her only son Sodhi Gurbachan Singh who died in the prime of his youth (in October 1912), while studying at the Chiefs' College, Lahore. The philanthropic lady took charge in December 1919 of the tottering local Khalsa Middle School founded in 1910, raised it to the High standard and gave it a building with 162 Kanals of beautiful green land in April 1921. The building and other property of the school were registered in the name of the Chief Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar, and since then the school is managed by that body. There were 11 classes with about 300 students on the rolls in 1941. The staff consisted of 14 members, with Sarcar Santokb Singh, B.A. (Hons.), B.T., Gyani, as Headmaster.—*vide* Headmaster's letter No-375 of 25th November, 1941.—G.

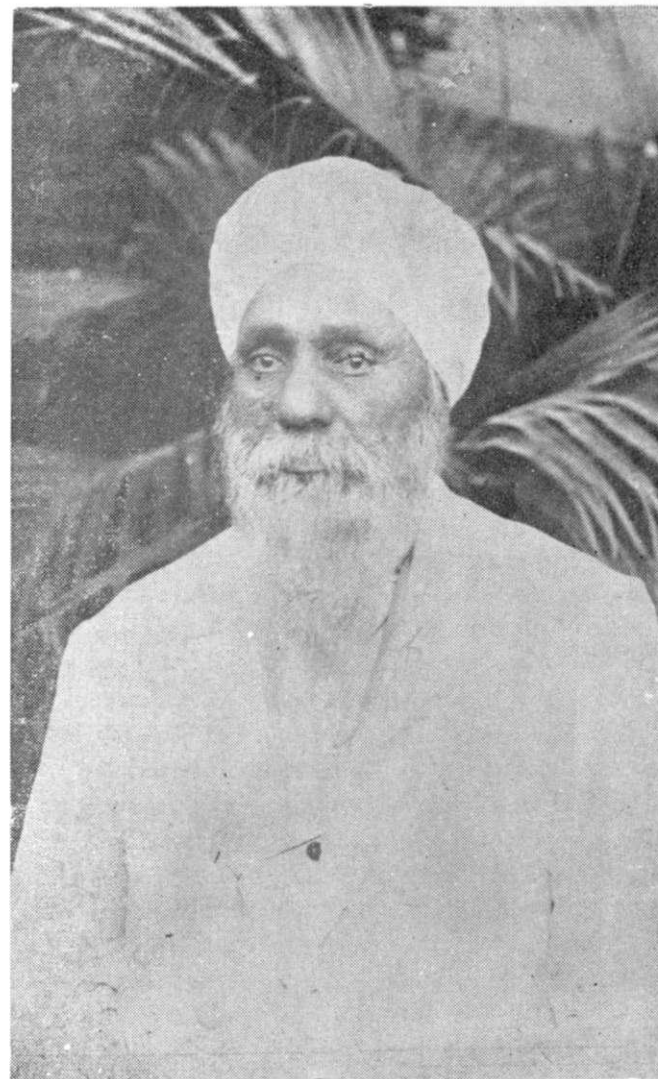
different. But the fact of my being a Government pensioner precluded such a possibility. One distressful incident took place at Hasan Abdal (Panja Sahib) Railway Station when I was at Rawalpindi city, my home. As I was going out to visit a friend, news was brought that the bodies of two young Akali Sikhs, who had been crushed underneath the railway train carrying the condemned *Jatha* of Sikh military pensioners to the Campbellpore jail, were being taken in a procession to the cremation ground. Nearly the whole city was out. From the *Gurdwara* of the Singh Sabha to the end of the Bhabra Bazaar, for over a mile, one saw a sea of human faces. The roofs of all shops and balconies of houses on both sides of the bazaar were all full of women and children. All traffic was stopped. Only one body had arrived when I reached the bazaar. The vast crowd kept waiting for the other till late in the afternoon in solemn quiet. It was given out that Panja Sahib Sikhs threw themselves on the rails, hoping that the engine driver, noticing them, would thus be compelled to stop and their object would be gained. But this expectation was belied. The driver either did not notice them or was unable to stop the engine. Be that as it may, feelings ran very high on account of this incident. And I heard an Arya Samajist bigot, standing close by, exclaim, "Oh! the Gurus have made Sikhs immortal!" I am glad that I should have been enabled to contribute my tears and my humble mite in the shape of a fifty-rupees note\* in response to an appeal on the funeral ground in aid of the two young widows whose husbands shed glories on the name *Khalsa* by so bravely immolating on the altar of their great faith.

\*Sri Guru Singh Sabha Rawalpindi Receipt No 3 (2103), Book No. 27, dated November 22, 1922.—G.

## CHAPTER LVI

### POST GOVERNMENT SERVICE ACTIVITIES IN MOGA AND KASHMERE

I am indebted to Sardar Jhanda Singh **IN MOGA AGAIN** Nathuwala, Bagha Purana *ilaqa*, Ferozepur district, and to my friend the late Sardar Bahadur Bishen Singh, of the Indian Educational Service, Inspector of Schools, Jullundur Division, in writing to me to take charge of the Bhupindra Khalsa High School, Moga. The institution had been started with money collected, at my persuasion, by the late Sardar Gurdit Singh of Chur Chak, a Military Pensioner, who wisely placed it with His Highness Maharaja Sir Bhupindra Singh Bahadur, ruler of Patiala, with the request that the amount be utilized for the establishment of a High School for boys. The request was granted and His Highness graciously undertook to offer a handsome supplementary contribution from the state. Over a lac of rupees had been spent on the construction of the School building; but as it usually happens, the local Managing Committee played drakes and ducks with the money. Further grants were, therefore, stopped. Some good intentioned members, however, lent a few thousand rupees for payment of salaries to the School staff. Such a state of things could not last long. With my arrival the whole aspect changed. The Prime Minister, Raja Sir Daya Kishan Kaul, placed enough funds in my hands with His Highness's sanction and enabled me to improve the staff and provide other amenities to the institution. The Panjab Government also, appreciating my work, placed the institution on Grant-in-aid list. My experience of public life in the Panjab proved



BHAGAT LAKSHMAN SINGH  
at the age of 75

an asset to the State. By a special *Farman*, I was appointed Representative of His Highness at Moga, with full powers in the appointment and dismissal of the school staff and to choose as my coadjutors such men from among the leading Sikhs of the *ilaga* who would willingly co-operate with me. Strengthened by these steps, I was able to enforce discipline and keep boys and teachers of the school under proper control. The skillfully engineered plan to march jathas to Jaito and seduce simple-minded Sikh peasantry and its raw callow youth was successfully countered. Sir Malcolm, now Lord, Hailey, and Sir Edward MacLagan, Governors of Panjab, eulogized my help in the maintenance of peace and order. Emboldened by the exhibition of such potential good-will, I conceived the idea of raising the institution to the status of a Degree college. My idea was approved. Raja Sir Daya Kishan, Prime Minister, specially visited Moga and permitted me to purchase a vast tract of land on the Ludhiana road near the village of Godewala, adjoining the Sub-Divisional Officer's bungalow and court. Rai Sahib Rallia Ram, Chief Engineer, with a European Assistant came to inspect the site and prepare plans for the erection of the college building. But with the political changes in the State resulting in the resignation of Raja Sir Daya Kishan Kaul from the Prime Ministership of Patiala and my own subsequent removal as His Highness's Representative, as a result of local envy and jealousy, it proved mere day-dream. I am, however, grateful that His Highness approved my establishment of five primary schools in the villages around Moga to serve as feeders to the main school and sanctioned an annual grant of five hundred rupees to a Girls school that I established there under the management of Bibi Amar Kaur, a saintly lady of an eminent local Sikh Sodhi family.

One word more which should look more like a fairy tale than a stern reality. Sardar Dalip Singh, B.A., of Runia, retired Deputy Commissioner, and Sardar Jhanda Singh conjointly with a relative of his had lent several thousand rupees to run the school during the days grants from Patiala had ceased to come. This amount had now risen to something like rupees thirty thousand with the addition of interest. I applied to the Patiala Government for the

payment of the loan. But a minion in authority, who had somehow got himself pitchforked over and above me turned down my request. The creditors sued me as manager of the school in the court of the Senior Sub-Judge, Ferozepur. When the case came up before the court for consideration, it appeared that the pronotes held by the creditors were not sufficiently stamped. To avoid any anxiety on this account, I forthwith declared that if I lived and Maharaja Sir Bhupindra Singh continued to rule in Patiala, the creditors would get back every penny of the loan received, and I prayed that the case might be adjourned to enable me to see His Highness on the matter. My request was granted. I then at once proceeded to Patiala and was able to get an interview with His Highness through the courtesy of the Private Secretary, Mir Maqbul Mahmud, if I remember the name aright. His Highness graciously heard me and passed orders that the loan be paid forthwith. As I saw His Highness, he was leaning against a table with two cherubs, one a 6 year old girlie endeavouring to spirit him away fairy like and the other a lad 7 or 8 years old standing sedate and calm with marvellous dignity. I remember how I cursed myself for disturbing the generous prince in his private compartments and interfering with his happiness.

My friend and patron, Revd. Mr. W.T. Wright, the late Director of Public Instruction, Panjab, to whose moral backing I greatly owed my success in the later part of my service, once humorously remarked that I should get old when I was 80. Luckily this casual remark was only too true. When my connection with the Moga Khalsa High School was severed, I was about 63 years old. But I felt young enough to place myself in harness again. It was only but natural that I should, therefore, have a longing for an outlet for my energies and zeal with which a generous providence had richly endowed me.

RUPAR KHALSA SCHOOL      Early in February, 1927, on the  
IMBROGLIO                      termination of my appointment as  
Manager of Bhupindra Khalsa High School, Moga, I received an  
invitation from Sardar Sarmukh Singh, I3.A., LL.B., who was then

the Honorary Secretary of the Rupar School, to improve the Khalsa High School, Rupar, for the establishment of which I had myself moved on the occasion of my first brief visit to Anandpur in the month of May or June 1922. The Managing Committee consisted mostly of young practising lawyers, all good intentioned, but too busy with their own professional work to give proper attention to this self-imposed service. What they required was to leave Rupar town alone with its population mostly non-Sikh and possessing already a well conducted Government High School, and a recognised Public High School under the control of a strong batch of devoted workers. To command success, the safest course was to cut short this expenditure by reducing the status of their institution and confine their activities in catering to the needs of the Sikh children of the villages in the neighbourhood. Seeing that my continued stay there was, therefore, not necessary, I went back home. I am glad that since then the school is being conducted on right lines and every effort is being made to guard against financial risks.

#### IN THE LOWER SHIVALAK RANGE

God is good and great ! How He ordains things ! Little did I know that instead of wasting my energies in the choking atmosphere of Rupar which had refused a place of halt even to Sri Guru Govind Singh, I should find myself during the ensuing winter months busily engaged in rambles over the lower Shivalak Range round about Dasuya, Garhdiwala and Hoshiarpur, sacred to the memory of the blessed Guru whose myrmidons swooped down on the invading hordes of the Nawabs of Lahore, Jullundur and Sirhind from their fortresses and made short shrift of them. Every ravine of the range, its every grove and cape has a history of its own and requires a Walter Scott to narrate how the hinterland of Vipasa and Stadru—Beas and Sutlej—would one day become the Land of Heroes by the mere touch of Guru Govind Singh's magic Wand. Great empires may rise and fall, as they do all the world over, but each river that rises from the bottom of the great Sumeru like the Indian Brahmaputra as they emerge from Mansrover lake and carry their waters through the gorges of Gilgit and Assam and pour



them down in the broad Indian Ocean sing the eternal song of destruction and construction. And the great Rishis from over their haunts in the verdurous recesses of their wonderful encircled conglomeration of many ranges proclaim the same eternal truth for the edification of the Indian humanity that if they want to live they<sup>^</sup> should know how to lose themselves and rise again as the waters of their holy rivers lose themselves in the oceans below and rise<sup><</sup> again in the shape of clouds to fly back to their original homes and replenish them with showers of pearls.

**MY FLIGHT TO KASHMERE** I was at this time about 67 years old. It is strange that till then I had never felt the urge to visit Kashmere even once, although I was living at Rawalpindi, which is a sort of a gate to it. My recent rambles in the Shivalak hills, however, now engendered in me desire to have the privilege of visiting Kashmere's Happy Valley. The journey was comparatively easy and cheap. I paid only thirty rupees for my seat in a motor car which dropped me in Srinagar in about eight or nine hours. The Sun's orb had just sunk down the horizon and I greatly enjoyed the sight of the great swinging bridge over the river Jhelum and of the picturesque mansions of Mira Qadal as they dangled and danced on the river banks. The delight of the next morning was simply wonderful when a tough relative of mine took me out for sight-seeing and I saw for myself for the first time the real Shalamar Gardens and read the famous lines :

*Gar firdaus bar ru e zamin ast,*

*Hamin ast o hamin ast o hamin ast*

for the first time bringing home to me the truth how deeply indebted Indian humanity is to the great Mughal Emperors who have left all over India remarkable monuments of art and industry and who after the middle ages were the real builders of Indian nationality by bringing a wider outlook to bear on their administration and making it possible for the dissemination of the ideas of amity and accord among the diverse peoples and races including this vast continent. Indeed it was the great Akbar who first conceived and adopted the unification of Indian peoples on the basis of Fatherhood

f God and Brotherhood of Man and it was really his great-tandson, Dara Shikoh, whose labours for the promotion of love and harmony cost him his life. Aurangzeb who was responsible for this fratricide never knew peace, being engaged in subduing Muslim viceroys and governors in Sourthern India, whom he could never conquer and with his end practically ended the Mughal rule, his descendants being mostly puppets and knew not how to make their influence felt.

But I am digressing. My resources did not permit me to roam about the whole valley over a hundred miles from one end to other as a younger and a richer person could have easily done. I could only see places where my companion would take me. I am indebted to him for showing me equally picturesque gardens near Anant Nag (now known as Islamabad). The visit to them was a treat never to be forgotten. From there I proceeded to Bawan (Mattan Sahib) where my companion was posted as a Forest Ranger. He lodged me with him for about a month during which it was my daily practice to climb over the lofty ridge close by over which there was a rest house belonging to the Canal Department. A little higher up was the canal which fertilized the low lying lands on the slope from its very source about 18 miles higher up and continued to irrigate this vast tract which became broader and broader as the hill pn the north receded. At every step there was something to admire and wonder at. My friend Babu Bhagwan Das Sun, my companion during these rambles, simply surprised me when he got me a basketful of almonds for a small silver coin. The same or perhaps a lesser amount sufficed for payment to the keeper of Buddhist monastery, standing stately in its pristine purity and reminding possible visitors of future how good and great were the people who lived here in times of yore. Oh, what a fatality that they are no longer in our midst to teach us how to live lives of simplicity and purity ! What a great change ! Not only India but the whole World with a few exceptions is the camping ground of land-agrabbers and profiteers whose appetite is insatiable ! With these bad reflections we climbed down the hill and found ourselves at Bawan again.

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It was all hustle and bustle there. The place is a small one with a few shops and a sacred tank which attracts pilgrims at all times, particularly at this time, month of August, when the deity in the famous shrine of Amar Nath makes himself visible, men from all over India, mostly *Sadhus* and old men and women, flock to the place to have the *darshan* of the god. The state authorities make requisite arrangements for the safe conduct of the pilgrims both ways. I had neither the strength nor the desire to visit Amar Nath; but opportunity offered itself for a visit to Pahlgam, some 30 miles from Bawan. I had heard a lot about the salubrious climate and the scenery of this Kashmere sanatorium. But I could not think of visiting it having no friend or acquaintance to look after me during my stay there. This difficulty was soon removed. Among the visitors to the place was my own pupil and friend, Professor Jodh Singh, M.A., of the Khalsa College, Amritsar. I followed him a week after. I arrived there just as the sun was about to sink in the horizon. The visitors were all lodged in densely pitched up tents. There were no sanitary arrangements. The atmosphere, therefore, was simply nauseating. And I remember how I felt relieved when I entered Jodh Singh's tent pitched up in a dry plot in the bed of the river. The noise of the torrents close by was, however, a disturbing factor and I am grateful to him for his listening to me and removing our tents and *chholdaries* to a terrace below the jungle road higher up. We stopped in this beautiful place for over a month. Tigers and hyenas roamed about close by, but did not care to disturb us. Possibly the fire we always kept burning all around us scared them away. The scenery from our place of abode was simply superb. The great snow-clad hills towards the south all conered with streaks of ice blazened under the flashes of the lightening as it joyously flung itself from one precipice to another, but we heard only the peals of thunder and soon lost all its awe. Twice we hired ponies to climb up. It was some three or four miles further up that for the first time I saw icebergs with pure crystal water flowing underneath them. The wide expanse of the landscape offered no small amusement to the youngsters in our company, who held a gala dance in the open. A

few of the bolder spirits climbed up the hill to see a famous lake there paying little heed to the rambling of the thunder which continued roaring as if by way of protest to the intruders, who, however, returned only after enjoying the view of the lake region. We felt no small anxiety for their safety. And it was not a small delight to us when they all joined us in pitched darkness roaring hilariously as if they had bagged a whole flock of wolves and tigers.

On another occasion we hired a number of ponies to take us to a stage or two towards the west. The path was broad enough and the journey was pleasant. We gave a treat to the urchins who surrounded us at the place of our halt and made merry ourselves. We felt as if we were transported to a region where everything was a transcendent beauty and it was not without a little twitch of pain and regret that we started back for our place of destination in the sombre valley of Pahlgam.

In a word, my stay at Pahlgam was a joyful experience, thanks to the uniform kindness and courtesy of my host Prof. Jodh Singh. Not less cordial was Sardar Sher Singh, M.Sc.'s reception of me.\* He was Divisional Forest Officer in charge of the Banihal *ilaga*. He came especially to show me the famous fount, the source of the river Jhelum. What an ecstasy to see the river from the road side and the green fields and groves its waters. My heart was full with the feelings of gratitude to the great ruler or rulers who had spent money so lavishly to provide such a handsome structure for enclosing this historic fount and for the great Artificer himself who created this wonder from within a crevice of the huge swarthy great Pir Panjal range. Sher Singh very kindly asked me to let me have the pleasure of his company for a few days at Banihal. The name was familiar to me, as it was I whose review won a prize for the author of the *Lakshmi Devi*, the well known

\*Sher Singh, M.Sc, was born at Rawalpindi on September 14, 1893. After his Matriculation from the Mission School, Rawalpindi, in 1910, he took up science subjects and passed M.Sc. in 1916. He then joined the Forest Department and rose to be Conservator of Forests.—G.

poetical work of Lala Kirpa Sagar, who so graphically describes the love intrigues of the great Maharaja Ranjit Singh with a Rajput damsel of Banihal upland. I had no opportunity to know and understand the Rajputs over there or hear of their folk-lore. But the tragic consequences of the inclement monsoonish weather of these days filled my impressionable mind with a sort of pain which it is difficult to suppress as I picture to myself what I then saw and heard. What a few days previous bore such gorgeous and transcendent look pleasant and melodious to the eye and ear, underwent a sudden change. The skies were overcast with clouds and it began to rain cats and dogs. The state arrangements for the safe conduct of pilgrims to Amar Nath Cave broke down. Most of the pilgrims and ponies perished on the way. And of hundreds of pilgrims that had gone for the *darshan* of the sacred *lingam* very few returned. The colony of Pahalgam, too, did not fare better. The bridge over the river was carried off and its waters overflowed its banks and blocked the way.

I was then encamped in the bed of the nullah coming down the Banihal tunnel. But fortunately for me the Kashmiri chowkidar who kept guard over me spent the whole night with his spade to turn down the course of the hill torrent and no harm was done to me. Sher Singh with his mother, wife and children, lay encamped higher up away from the passage of the waters. Next morning the Zaildar and other visitors who called on us brought harrowing tales of the havoc caused by the waters down the tunnel. Any number of men, women, and children who slept on the banks of nullah were swept off. A day or two after the skies cleared, and I was able to leave Banihal and move down to Islamabad. The whole route was ruin and desolation. Not a vestige of green grown up rice crops was in sight. Peasants leaned against trees were shedding tears and their elderly people were consoling them. The holy poet Guru Tegh Bahadur truly describes in verse man's helplessness in such dismal moments when he says:

*Hari ki gati nahi koi janai,*

*Jogi jati tapi pachi hare aru bahu log siane,*

*Chhin mehi rao rank kau karei, rao rank kar dare,*

*Rite bhare, bhare sakhnava, yah ta ko bivhdre.*

[Bihagra, IX, 2-1- 3

"The Lord's ways nobody knows, Jogis, Jatis, Tapis and most men of wisdom all own their helplessness. In a moment he turns a prince to a pauper and a pauper to a prince. He fills empty treasures and those full he empties. This is His way of work !"

I was fed up with all this and resolved to move down to my home in Rawalpindi. But for miles the road from Islamabad (Anantnag) to Srinagar was covered with flood waters. I considered it unsafe to cross it and went back to Bawan (Mattan Sahib), where I halted again for about a month and explored the neighbouring ruins of Martanda, a famous Buddhist temple which stands on a vast plateau overlooking the valley of Kashmir. It was in the middle of October that I got a seat in a lorry and arrived at Srinagar which looked as if nothing had happened, the flood water having been turned down under the supervision of my old class-fellow and friend, the late Rai Bahadur Lala Makhan Lai, Superintending Engineer, Kashmir.

\*हरि की गति नहि कोऊ जानै ।  
जोगी जती तपी पचि हारे अरु बहु लोग सिआने ॥१॥ रहाउ ॥  
छिन महि राउ रंक कउ करई राउ रंक करि डारे ।  
रीते भरे भरे सखनावै यह ता को बिवहारे ॥१॥  
[बिहागड़ा, म. ९, २-१]

## CHAPTER LVII

SIKH GURDWARA REFORM MOVEMENT  
ITS REACTION ON PANJAB GOVERNMENT POLICY

The movement for the reform of the Sikh temples is as old as the modern Sikh renaissance or, what is the same thing, it is as old as the Singh Sabha movement.\* Sikhs of the new blood have all along felt that historic temples, being places of pilgrimage, should be under Panthic control so that it may be possible to enforce disciplinary measures. The efforts of the leaders who started this movement were simply confined to educating public opinion on this question. But when, for decades, slow legal procedure to turn unsatisfactory *Mahants* (priests) out of their offices proved ineffective, the more enthusiastic men among the community organised new committees of management and forcibly removed the old incumbents of the temples, when they were found to be lost to all sense of honour and propriety. The District officers of Campbellpore and Sialkot actually went so far as to help the new party in getting them possession of the Gurdwaras at Hasan Abdal and Babe ki Ber in their respective jurisdictions. The attitude of the reformers, backed by British officers, alarmed Mahant Narain Das of Nankana Sahib, the name given to the temple built at the birth place of Baba Nanak, the first Guru of the Sikhs. The Nankana Sahib temple has vast lands and property attached to it and its income from revenue rents and offerings aggregates to lakhs of rupees per

\*Vide the series of articles 'Wanted a Sikh Church' in the *Khalsa*, Lahore, of the year 1899.—G.

annum. The Mahant in charge of it, Narain Das, was a man of ill repute. Fearing that the next move of the reformers' party would be to turn him out, he sought the help of Mr. C. M. King, Commissioner of Lahore. This officer was of a different type. He was believed to be pro-Indian in his sympathies, but he was not in favour of allowing the Sikhs of the reform party to take forcible possession of their temples or *Gurdwaras*, as they call them. He wrote to Mahant Narain Das saying, that he, the *Mahant*, could depend on Government assistance in case the Gurdwara Reform Movement used force against him. But this did not satisfy Mahant Narain Das. He bade for the sympathy of the orthodox Hindus and, with the help of the vast resources at his command, he organised and financed a counter movement and started an organ of his own, called the *Sant Sewak*. Even this he did not believe was enough. He fortified the entrances to the temple and bored its walls to shoot possible intruders, and armed a large number of ruffians whom he handsomely paid. The Director of the Criminal Intelligence Department in India boasted to a titled relative of mine, a couple of years back, that where there were two Indians one of them was in his pay. One can readily believe this. But how far vigilant his men were in the Punjab may be judged from the fact that these preparations of Mahant Narain Das did not come to their knowledge, and if they did know what the man was doing, they did not inform the authorities of the true state of affairs. The result was that when, on the morning of the 20th February, 1921, Bhai Lachhman Singh of Dharowal and his companions attended the temple and were seated in an attitude of devotion, a volley of bullets rained on them. Those of his companions who tried to save themselves, were felled by hired ruffians. The killed and wounded were then piled up in a heap and burnt with kerosine oil. Bhai Dalip Singh of Jaranwala, in the Lyallpur district, who reached the spot a little later, hearing the sound of gunfire, rushed in to personally protest against this inhuman cruelty of the Mahant, whom he had known for good many years. But, he, too, was shot dead.

The news of these events was brought to the notice of the

Government by Sardar Karam Singh, local railway station master, felt a thrill of horror throughout the whole country. The Inspector Commissioner and the higher Civil officers were soon on the spot and the situation was taken in hand. The Governor, Sir Evelyn Maclagan, together with his counsellors went to the place of this tragic occurrence to personally offer his sympathy to the afflicted community, and, with commendable foresight made over the keys of the temple to a party of leading Sikhs of the new school of thought and assured them that Government would leave no stone unturned to have the perpetrators of the foul deed suitably punished. This wise act served as oil over the troubled waters, and the decision to associate leading Sikhs with the preliminary investigations still further restored confidence in the Government. These men, however, believed that the investigations were not being conducted with necessary vigilance and impartiality. Therefore, they soon dissociated themselves from the enquiry. It was broadly hinted that Commissioner King and the Police Superintendent Bowring had not been vigilant in the discharge of their duties. The writers of newspapers which published these allegations were charged with defamation and punished in the usual course. The whole Anglo-Indian officialdom felt insulted. Men were not wanting who for selfish ends inflamed the passions of the already outraged alien bureaucrats. The Sikhs of the Reform policy, too, went out of hand, as it were. Despairing of obtaining justice in the ordinary courts, they began to take forcible possession of all their temples. This was a direct challenge to the bureaucracy, which stood for law and order, and in the name of order, they set their whole machinery in motion and they did not rest until each and every man who had dared to defy them was clapped in the jails. Thus feeling secure, it suggested itself to them, in an evil moment, to take back the keys of the Golden Temple at Amritsar which the good Sir Maclagan had, a few months before, transferred to the control of a representative committee of the Sikhs. This was done, ostensibly, under the plea that the controlling Committee did not represent all interests, but really the motive force was the conviction that a mistake had been made in making over the temple

temple, with its vast income, to a body of men who might utilize it for political ends. But this conviction grew on the bureaucracy too late. There could be no going back now. The District Magistrates in all Sikh districts called representative Sikhs of their *ilakas* together and asked their opinion; but they were all unanimous in their condemnation of the action of the Government in taking back the keys of the Golden Temple from the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, the name by which the Central Gurdwara Reform Committee had now come to be remembered. The bureaucracy was now in a fix. But it must be said to their credit that they saw their error and wanted an excuse to fall back from their position. Sir John Maynard was the member who had to deal with such matters. He had been known for years as an officer accessible to the people and one who was believed to be sympathetic towards Indian aspirations. When I saw him in some connection, I suggested to him that a serious mistake had been made in interfering with the religious affairs of the Sikhs and that no Government, especially an alien one, came out unscathed from its fight with the subjects, when religion was involved, and that it would be a pity if by ill-considered steps, the Government forfeited the regard of a devoted people. And he had the fairness to admit that under the circumstances brought to light, the best thing to do was to return the keys to the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee. He lost no time to report accordingly. Sir Edward Maclagan, on his part, was too good a man to withhold his consent to such a conciliatory measure. He gave his sanction forthwith.\*

•For a more detailed study of the Nankana Sahib tragedy the inquisitive reader is referred to the following contemporary literature :

Sardul Singh Kaveeshar. *Saka Nankana Sahib*. Akali Agency, Lahore, 1921.

I | Bhagat Singh. *Sri Nankana de Puratan Hal*. Amritsar.

Mohan Singh, Bhai. *Bhayanak Saka Nankana Sahib*. Tarn Taran.

Gurbakhsh Singh 'Shamsher'. *Shahidi Jiwan*. 1938.

(Teja Singh.) *Gurdwara Reform Movement and the Sikh Awakening*. Jullundur, 1922-23.

Sahni, R.R. *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines*. S.G.P.C., Amritsar, 1964.—G.

The announcing of the decision was hailed by all well-disposed people. With this decision it was hoped that the trouble between the Government and the Sikhs would be over. But events soon proved that this belief was a mistaken one. As has been already observed, there are always men who exploit the weakness of great people. They always swarm round them and it is no exaggeration to say that, not unoften, they succeed in acquiring complete sway over the minds and hearts of their patrons, who unconsciously act as mere puppets. The case with Anglo-Indian bureaucrats in the Panjab was exactly of this nature. More than seventy years had passed since the Panjab came into the hands of the British people. But there are very few British officers, even among those whose hair have grown grey in service, in this country, who know who is a Sikh and who is not a Sikh. They take every long-haired man to be a Sikh and if such a man happens to be a Government parasite, that is to say, a land-grabber or a place-hunter, whose manners and speech are necessarily insinuating, they easily fall into the trap laid for them and begin to think and act as if they were under the influence of a charmer's wand. In a word, they soon came to believe that the Gurdwara Reform Movement was a subversive movement, which aimed at overthrowing British Raj and which it was, therefore, necessary to suppress. Men, who did not mean good to anybody, succeeded in creating the belief that the returning of the keys of the Golden Temple was an acknowledgment of weakness. Now, there is no bureaucrat who would not risk his all in keeping up his prestige. Of all bureaucrats, the British bureaucrat is most sensitive, for he rules over people who have not their freedom, and who cannot bring him to book, in the majority of cases, if he is found tripping, who scents sedition in the very air he breathes and dreams sedition in his dreams. It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if the impression should have gained ground that the best way to meet the situation was to teach the disaffected Sikhs a lesson that they would long remember.

It was some such feeling that was responsible for the starting of a campaign against the Sikhs in connection with the Guru-Ka-

Pagh Gurdwara, a place in the Ajnala Tehsil of the Amritsar District, sacred to the memory of Guru Arjan Dev and Guru Tegh Bahadur. The Gurdwara had landed property bequeathed to it by the residents of the adjoining village *Ghukkewali*. Mahant Sunder pas had come to an understanding with the Shiromani Gurdwara prabandhak Committee in consideration of an allowance and the management of the temples was entrusted to a local committee. A few months after, the local officials took the world by surprise by arresting the Akalis for cutting *Kikar* trees on the Gurdwara lands to supply fuel to the free kitchen attached to the Gurdwara. It was contended by the officials that the Gurdwara had been transferred by the Mahant to communal control and not the lands attached to it and that, therefore, the cutting of the trees was tantamount to a regular act of plunder. This they said was being done deliberately to defy the laws of land and was, therefore, deserving of severe notice. The Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, on their part, contended that the lands belonged to the Gurdwara and, hence, no offence had been committed. In this view they were supported by all sections of the people. The officials thought that the best thing to do was to belabour the parties of Akalis that went to cut the trees with regulation *lathis* till they became senseless. But they soon saw that this method of coercion was quite abortive. One *jalha* (party) was beaten off, but another soon followed in increasing numbers which, in a few days, reached upwards of hundred daily, marching from the Akal Takht, in military array, singing hymns in praise of the Lord, till they were stopped by the police and subjected to severe thrashing. The road from Amritsar to Ajnala, something like 13 miles, was a seething sea of human faces. All communities vied with one another in rendering first-aid to the wounded. Akalis and men and women from the villages on the way waited all day with cans of milk and baskets of bread for the huge multitude that passed that way every day. Men came from distant places to witness the sufferings of the brave Akalis who cheerfully submitted to unspeakable tortures and to render such assistance as was needed.

Of these men the prominent were Pandit Madan Mohan

Malaviya, the great Hindu leader, whose name will be handed down to posterity as founder of the Benares Hindu University, and the Rev. C. F. Andrews, the noble Christian missionary, who has devoted himself to relieve suffering wherever found, and whom no Indian can remember without profound reverence and gratitude. It will be sufficient to insert an excerpt from the latter's report of Police atrocities committed in this connection. This is what he says :-

"At one P. M. on that day I started from Guru Ka Bagh and after leaving the main road proceeded along the bank of a canal. There were three tongas in all. When we had gone some distance along the bank of the canal, we saw two Sikhs with black turbans on the opposite bank waving their hands to us and pointing to the sky where a great bird was circling in its flight towards Amritsar. Immediately all those who were in the tongas got down and eagerly pointed at the bird to me, and told me that every day as soon as the beating at Guru-ka-Bagh began, the golden hawk rose from the Guru's garden on its flight to Amritsar to tell those who were serving at the Golden Temple what was taking place. They asked me if I had seen the bird and I answered that I had seen in the distance the great bird that they had pointed out but that I could not say that it was Golden Hawk or not. They said to me, 'that was the bird, it was the Golden Hawk. It has gone to the Darbar Sahib about the sufferings of the people.' There was a light in their faces as they spoke to me, which betokened joy. I was special struck by the look of devotion in the face of a Sikh lady of middle age who accompanied us. I can only describe by saying that she looked in her quiet devotion like a picture of the 'Madonna.' The whole scene, the intense faith of my companions, the look of reverence in their faces, the solemn awe mingled with joy, moved me very deeply. It was the first event which gave me the religious atmosphere of all that I was afterwards to experience in the later scenes. It put me in touch with the Akali Reform Movement in its spiritual aspect as perhaps nothing could have done.

"After leaving the bank of the local canal we had to pass across open ground for a long distance, which was covered with water in certain places. Our progress was naturally slow in the

tongas. We met on the route a band of hundred Akalis in black turbans who had marched that morning from Amritsar after having taken a vow at the Golden Temple that they would not commit one single act of violence, either by word or deed. I was to see later on how faithfully they kept that vow. On subsequent days, I had the opportunities of witnessing the scene at the Golden Temple itself, as they came out with religious joy written on their faces, and a tiny wreath of white flowers placed on their black turbans, which dedicated them to the sacrifice, I was able to see also in the city the crowds of spectators, Hindus, Musalmans and those of every religion, welcoming and encouraging them as they marched solemnly and joyfully forward calling upon the name of God as their Protector and Saviour. There, in the city they were in the very beginning of their pilgrimage. Mile after mile of mud-stained, water-logged road lay before them. When I saw them on this first day of my visit, as they drew near to the end of their march, they were bespattered with mud and dust dirt and perspiration was streaming from them; but their garlands of white flowers were still encircling their black turbans, they were still uttering with triumphant voices their prayer to God for Protection, and the light of religion was still bright in their faces. There were among them who were young lads, and a very few old men, with grey beards, who had insisted on being taken and would not be denied; but the great majority were of military age and it was easy to guess that out of these stalwart bearded men there were many who had served in the army. I had an opportunity, later, of getting accurate statistics, and it would appear that at least one in the three of the Sikhs in these Akali *jathas*, as they were called, had been a soldier and had served during the Great War.

"We got down from the tongas and went along with them for some distance. I was dressed in my English dress, with a sun-helmet on my head; but even before they knew my name they returned my greetings without the slightest trace of bitterness in their faces. There was a halt to drink water, and they got to know who I was and came forward. Then one who had been serving water in a brass vessel came to me and offered the water to me



also to drink. I put my hand forward to receive it, but he said to me, 'Please take the vessel itself,' and I took it in my hand and drank from it. The act had a strongly religious aspect to me, it was as if I was sharing in a sacrament of consecration before the suffering was to begin.

"At any place, where water could be received along the road there were villagers, both men and women, who waited eagerly each day to fulfil their small act of service by giving water to the Akali jathas. Again I noticed the extraordinary devotion of the women, their faces were full of motherly tenderness towards those who were going forward in the name of their religion, to receive suffering without retaliation.

"After very great difficulty and halts at impassable places we reached Guru-Ka-Bagh at last. The first sight that met our gaze was the eight motor lorries, such as carry passengers for fare, which were now being used as substitute for ambulance waggons. When I looked at them, I could picture vividly the acute suffering of those, who would be carried in them for more than fourteen miles to the base-hospital in the city. Here and there the motors would almost certainly get stuck in the deep mud. The jolting in other places would be difficult to bear even for a man who was quite well. What must it have been to men suffering from many contusions and wounds ?

"There was one act of humanity which might at once have been thought of on the part of the officials, but no one among them seemed to have noticed it, or suggested it. The public road along the canal was almost worse from the point of view of jolting than the open track beyond. But on the other side of the canal was a private road, kept for officials along which the motor lorries with the wounded persons might have passed smoothly and quickly. It would have been an inexpressible relief to them on that terrible journey back from Guru-Ka-Bagh if the lorries had been allowed to use it. But the subordinate Government officials who were approached time after time by the doctors and attendants, refused altogether to allow them. I am quite certain that if the higher officials had been approached, they would not have refused. But

One of the greatest hardships in India at the present time is the [tension which exists on both sides, the open gulf which grows day [by day wider, the almost complete distrust with which Indians have learnt with bitter experience to regard the official world.

"When I reached the Gurdwara itself, I was struck by the absence of excitement such as I had expected to find among so great a crowd of people. Close to the entrance there was a reader of the scriptures, who was holding a very large congregation of silent worshippers as they were seated on the ground before him. In another quarter there were attendants who were preparing the simple evening meal for the Gurdwara guests by grinding the flour between two large stones. There was no sign that the actual beating had just begun and that the sufferers had already endured the showers of blows. But when I asked one of the passers-by, he told me that the beating was now taking place. On hearing this news, I at once went forward. There were some hundreds of persons seated on an open piece of ground, watching what was going on in front, their faces strained with agony. I watched their faces first of all before I turned the corner of a building and reached a spot where I could see the beating itself. There was not a cry raised from the spectators, but the lips of many of them were moving in prayers. It was clear that they had been taught to repeat the name of God and to call on God for deliverance. I can only describe the silence and worship and the pain on the faces of the people, who were seated in prayer, as reminding me of the shadow of the cross. What was happening to them was truly in some dim way a crucifixion. The Akalis were undergoing their baptism of fire, and they cried to God for help out of the depth of their agony of spirit.

"Uptil now I had not seen the suffering itself as it was reflected in the faces of spectators. But when I passed beyond a projecting wall and stood face to face with the ultimate moral contest, I could understand the strained looks and lips that silently prayed. It was sight that I never wish to see again, a sight incredible to an Englishman. There were four Akali Sikhs with their black turbans, facing a band of about a dozen policemen, including two English Officers. They had walked slowly up to the line of the

police just before I had arrived and they were standing silently ; front of them at about a yard's distance. They were perfectly still and did not move further forward. Their hands were placed together in prayer and it was clear that they were praying. Then without the slightest provocation, on their part, an Englishman lunged forward the head of his lathi which was bound with brass. He lunged it forward in such a way that his fist which held the staff struck the Akali Sikh, who was praying, just at the collar bone with great force. I looked at the most cowardly blow as I saw it struck and I had the greatest difficulty in keeping myself under control. But beforehand I had determined that I must on no account interfere by word or deed, but simply watch, for the vow which had been taken by the sufferers must be sacred to me also. Therefore, passive silence on my part was imperative, but it is difficult to describe to those who have not seen the sight with their own eyes how difficult such a passive attitude was.

"The blow which I saw was sufficient to fell the Akali Sikh and send him to the ground. He rolled over, and slowly got up once more, and faced the same punishment over again. Time after time one of the four that had gone forward was laid prostrate by repeated blows now from the English Officer, and now from the Police who were under his control. The others were knocked out more quickly. On this and subsequent occasions the Police committed certain acts which were brutal in the extreme. I now saw with my own eyes one of the police kick in the stomach of a Sikh who stood helplessly before him. It was a blow so foul that I could hardly restrain myself from crying out aloud and rushing forward. But later on I was to see another act which was, if anything, even fouler still. For, when one of the Akali Sikhs had been hurled to the ground and was lying prostrate, a police sepoy stamped with his foot upon him, using his full weight; the foot struck the prostrate man between the neck and the shoulder. A third blow almost equally foul, was struck at an Akali who was standing at the side of his fallen companion. The blow hurled him across the body of the fallen man who was unconscious, at the very time when he being taken up by two ambulance workers. The intention of sue

L blow was so brutally insolent that I watched for the Englishman ; command, in **this**, as also in other cases, to rebuke the police sepoy who did the deed, but as far as I could see, he did nothing to rebuke or check his men. I told all these things that I had seen to the Governor and every officer whom I met the next day.

"The brutality and inhumanity of the whole scene was indescribably increased by the fact that the men who were hit were **Graying** to God and had already taken a vow that they would **Remain** silent and peaceful in word and deed. The Akali Sikhs who [had taken this vow, both at the Golden Temple before starting and also at the shrine of Guru-Ka- Bagh, were, as I have already stated, largely from the army. They had served in many a campaign in Flanders, in France, in Mesopotamia, and in East Africa. Some of them at the risk of their own safety may have saved the lives of Englishmen who had been wounded...Now they were felled to the ground at the hands of English officials serving the same Government **that** they themselves had served. They were obliged to bear the brunt of blows each of which was an insult and humiliation, but each was turned into a triumph by the spirit with which it was endured.

"It was a strangely new experience to these men as to fell them **to** the ground yet never to utter a word or strike a blow in return. The **vow** they had made to God was kept to the letter. I ~~lisaw~~ **no** act, no look, of defiance. It was a true martyrdom for them as they went forward, a true act of faith, a true deed of devotion to God. They remembered how their Gurus suffered, and they rejoiced to add their own suffering to the treasury of their wonderful faith. The onlookers, too, who were Sikhs, were praying for them and the inspiration of their noble religion, with its joy in suffering innocently borne, could alone keep them from rushing forward **to** retaliate for the wrongs which they felt was being done.

"There has been something far greater in this event than a mere dispute about land and property. It has gone far beyond the technical question of legal possession or distraint. A new heroism parnt through suffering has arisen in the land. A new lesson in

moral war-fare has been taught to the world.\* This fact in the ultimate issue is independent of the mere legal question of trespass decided for or against the Akali Sikhs. They believe intensely that their right to cut wood in the Garden of the Guru was an immemorial religious right and this faith of theirs is surely to be counted for righteousness, whatever a defective or desolate law may determine or fail to determine concerning legality.

"One thing I have not mentioned which was significant of all that I have written concerning the spirit of the suffering endured. It was very rarely that I witnessed any Akali Sikh who went forward to suffer, flinch from a blow when it was struck. Apart from the instinctive and involuntary reaction of the muscles that had the appearance of a slight shrinking back, there was nothing, as far as I can remember, that could be called a deliberate avoidance of the blow struck. The blows were received one by one without resistance and without a sign of fear."

If there were more Christ-like Englishmen in India, the relations between the rulers and ruled would be humane and less mechanical, and the cause of Christianity would gain without the help of the huge propaganda that has been going on in the country to convert the people to that faith.

The noble-hearted Andrews lost no time in seeing the Governor and telling him what he had seen with his own eyes. The result was that the beating ceased, but the resourceful local officers now had recourse to another method of intimidation. The Akalis were

•That Revd. Mr. Andrews was correct in his estimate of the movement is borne out by the adoption of the Akali methods by Mahatma Gandhi in the carrying out of his Civil Disobedience Movement. Government Secretaries and other high-placed government officers whom I count among my friends have admitted to me in the course of conversation that it is the Akali Sikh who have set the example of Civil Disobedience by non-violent, non-cooperation. And I am inclined to think that it is this conviction that has the British rulers to transfer affections to the Panjabi Musalmans though they may not openly confess it. —BLS.

hauled up before law-courts and were sentenced to various terms of rigorous imprisonment ranging from six months or so to three years with heavy fines. This did not, however, improve matters. Bigger *jaihas* daily marched in the same order to court imprisonment, till the number exceeded 5,000 in a few weeks. One day I witnessed a scene myself from start to finish. The sight of mothers, sisters, and wives garlanding their dear ones at the *Kal Takht* when they were marching to court suffering for their faith, was pathetic in the extreme. I quietly followed the procession with tear-bedimmed eyes, and even my companion, a young, stiff-necked Sikh graduate appeared to be moved. The farce enacted by Government officials at the *Guru-Ka-Bagh* is worth recording. The *tiatha* split itself into batches of four each at the Gurdwara of *Guru Arjan Dev*. Each batch offered a prayer before starting for the *Guru-Ka-Bagh* about a furlong off. They sang hymns as they proceeded to the grove of *Kikar* trees, and when they reached their destination, they were caught hold of by a policeman, who took them, one by one, to their superior, lounging in an easy chair and enjoying a smoke. This man, presumably a young Musalman [Police Inspector, was simply playing a part in the drama. He arrested the pilgrims on hearing from them that they had come to cut wood for the Guru's kitchen and politely sent them off to the dock-up. The men were devout persons who had been attracted to the spot only by the Guru's name. They had no hatchets with them and they had cut no trees. In fact, there were very few trees to cut. The garden was so only in name. But notwithstanding they were removed to the lock-up and next day they were brought before a Magistrate who was specially deputed to try these cases and who sent them all to jail as ordinary felons. My heart boiled within me with rage at this travesty of justice. I had been taught from my boyhood upwards to love all that was English, and to regard Englishmen and English institutions as models of all that was good, and, although, as I grew older, actual contact with British bureaucrats has lessened my admiration for them to no small degree, I could never have imagined that a big lot of them would behave as they did in this deplorable affair. Still, I was not

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without a hope. I could hardly believe that a people with such a great past would continue to ignore counsels of sanity. These expectations were not belied. As time passed, the official hierarchy gave abundant proofs of a returning sense. A Hindu millionaire the late Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, the great philanthropist of Lahore, appeared on the scene. He obtained a lease of Guru-Ka-Bagh lands on the understanding that so long as the land was with him, there could be no objection to the cutting of the trees for the Guru's kitchen. Simultaneously the prosecution stopped and the Government extricated itself from the muddle that the bungling officials had created. Later in the Provincial Legislative Council the Government suffered a defeat over a resolution for the release of the Akali prisoners. But the demon of prestige stood in the way and it refused to listen to the unanimous request of the elected councillors. Some weeks afterwards it decided to release all Guru-Ka-Bagh prisoners on learning from its officials that the Akalis had rendered valuable service in the Hindu-Muhammadan riots that had just then broken out at Amritsar. Thus the Akalis came out victorious in the struggle with the Government. They maintained a non-violent attitude throughout under extreme provocation. A whole world now remembers them with unstinted admiration.

The good Maclagan's term of office expired soon after afore-said incidents and Sir (now Lord) Malcolm Hailey succeeded to the Panjab satrapy. The new Governor of the Panjab was pre-eminently fitted to restore peace and order. A legislation for the management of all the Sikh Gurdwaras was framed and carried unanimously through the Panjab Legislative Council. Under this the Control of the Gurdwaras vested in a Committee (henceforth called Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee) elected by the entire community generally, and a tribunal was appointed to try all disputes in connection with the working of the Gurdwaras machinery. Thus the community was given an opportunity to manage its shrines itself and spend the income thereof as best as it may. The Committee has since put in fairly good work, considering the complicated machinery it has had to handle. It is only natural that there should be more or less wrangling between the various groups and parties

When disposal of vast estates and their income is at issue. It is hoped that as time goes and the working of the act becomes smooth, as a result of experience gained, the Prabandhak Committee will be able to justify its existence. That the aims with which it was formed were good will be abundantly clear from the fact the other sister communities in the province have followed suit, and long time will not elapse before they also will have their own separate acts for the administration of their shrines.\*

\*For Guru-Ka-Bagh affair, also see :

*Report of the Guru-Ka-Bagh Congress Enquiry Committee.* Lahore, 1921.

Sundram, G. A. *Guru-Ka-Bagh Satyagraha.* Madras, 1923.

Sahni, Ruchi Ram. *Struggle for Reform in Sikh Shrines.* Amritsar, 1964.

Andrews, C. F. Statement in *Tribune*, Lahore, September 19-20, 1922, *Manchester Guardian*, February, 15, 24, 1924.—G.

## CHAPTER LVIII

## RELIGION IN DANGER

The cry of Religion in Danger has most appealing effect on men's minds, thanks to the ingenuity of religion-makers. In all times, in all climes and in all countries it has served as a clarion call not only to duty but also to lead frenzied, marauding hosts to plunder and destroy. Especially this has been the case in this caste-and faction-cum-priest-ridden sub-continent. And the wonder is that the men who raise this cry are mostly those who are anything but religious. For the benefit of the reader I narrate an incident of which I happen to be a witness myself.

One afternoon, during the month of May, 1927, as I arrived at the Lahore Railway Station and engaged a tonga to take me to the Mall, the driver, a middle-aged Muslim, seemed to be a bit hesitating. "What's the matter?" said I, "Drive on to so and so's business premises." "Oh, thank you," put in the man, "I thought you wanted me to take you to the city. You seem to be unaware that Hindus, Sikhs and Musalmans are breaking one another's heads there." And then the good man briefly told me how the riot had originated. On arriving at my destination and leaving my things there I went to see if all was well with a young relative residing in the vicinity of Nila Gumbaz. Near the General Post Office I met » policeman who would not let me proceed. I took another road, but there, too, my way was blocked. I had to return to my place of abode and retired for the night. But sleep was impossible. Early next morning, I learnt from the *Civil and Military Gazette* that the Governor, Sir Malcolm Hailey, was at the city Kotwali watchi» I

the situation, that a European regiment was patrolling the city, that the whole night previous Muslim mob was in possession of the city, and that the big Hindu and Sikh notables had shut themselves within their mansions. Not even those men in Lahore who love to shine in lime light and who waste so much eloquence over the catholicity of their creeds and who profess equal regard for all faiths and the founders of those faiths, and for whom that was the best chance to convert men into angels, dared to leave their dens even during the night, the time when lions are known to prowl about freely. The truth really is that the Muslim populace those days, with a few honourable exceptions, had gone mad. They thirsted for Sikh blood or it was the Sikhs who were alleged to have first provoked the strife, and they had it to their heart's content. This is what a witness, Sardar Heera Singh, who was Post Master in charge of the Dabbi Bazar Post Office, declared before the court of Lala Kanwal Nain who tried the culprits responsible for the murder of Sardar Attar Singh, the only young son of his old father. He was employed as an Accountant in some Railway Office. Having obtained a pass for his new post in the North West Frontier Province, he went to his residence in the city to get his suit case. In vain his father, whom he had met in the morning, expressly wished him not to enter the city, which was in a disturbed state, but he paid no heed to his unfortunate sire's warning and biked to his place under the impression that no harm would come to him, for he was a peace-loving youth who harboured no ill feeling against any body. As he entered the Dabbi Bazar, near Wazir Khan's Masjid, he was mobbed and killed. I shall now quote the relevant portion of the evidence in this case given at an hearing and, published in the *Tribune*, on June 22, 1927. "Lala Kanwal Nain, Magistrate First Class, resumed the hearing of what is known as 'Attar Singh Murder Case,' and recorded the evidence of Dr. Banwari Lai, M. B., B. S., who deposed having examined the injuries of Attar Singh deceased. Attar Singh had deep wounds in his belly and eyes. Lala Gurdas Ram, House Surgeon, Mayo Hospital, who was on duty on the night of the 4th May, North Surgical Ward, deposed to having seen Attar Singh lying wounded on a stretcher outside the Operation

Theatre whose abdomen was operated by Colonel Broom. Sardar Heera Singh, Post Master, Dabbi Bazar, deposed that he heard a noise at about 5-30 p. m. on the 4th May last at the corner of the Gali Tezabian, where his Post Office was situated. Peeping out he saw a young Sikh lying prostrate on the ground in the clutches of six or seven Muslims who were beating him. Witness on account of fear could not see with what weapons the assailants of the Sikh were armed and closed the door. Witness heard a voice asking for water. The cry was further to the effect that many Muslims were his friends. But all who came were beating him. Another man replied that instead of water *urine should be given*. Proceedings were adjourned."

The italics are mine. I do not know what the fate of the murderers was. But years after I met young Attar Singh's father in Anarkali Bazar. The poor man had actually become mad. It was with great difficulty that I pumped out a few disjointed words from him just to know how he had fared since his cruel bereavement. He was one of the *Keertan* parties that I led through the bazars of Lahore as a young man, during the later ninties, in connection with Gurburb processions. Those days music flowed from his mouth. He was now a maniac. The very thought of him brings down tears from my eyes. Any number of Sikhs and even Hindus were murdered in this connection as they arrived at the Lahore Railway Station and were driven from there to Delhi Gate or Mochi Gate. Poor bread-earners were stabbed and done to death as they wended their way home after the day's work. Even innocent shopkeepers doing business in their shops, quite unaware of what was happening outside, were not spared.

Since then, and particularly after murders in connection with the Shahidganj Gurdwara in Landa Bazar, Lahore, a great change has come on me. Time was when I admired prophets and seers of all peoples. Nay, I actually organized tea parties in connection with their birthday celebrations. I now fight shy of such functions. I have come to think that Lenin and *Ata Turk* Kamal were not very much to blame when they freed their countries from the tyrannous grasp of religion-mongers.

I have also begun to value the views in this behalf of the distinguished Congress leader Pandit Jawahar Lai Nehru, though I Ho not understand how the hetrogenous mob he leads will hold together when political *Pandas*, *Mullahs* and the so-called *neo-Akalis* again sound the bugle of internecine war.

## CHAPTER LIX

THE KHALSA RESUSCITATED IN 1929  
IN KASHMIR (1932-36)

**THE 'KHALSA'** These were the last days of October, 1928. **RESUSCITATED** After a few days of halt with a relation of mine I proceeded to Khalsa College, Amritsar, to have a heart-to-heart talk with Sardar Bahadur Bishen Singh, Principal, on the desirability of having an English organ of the Sikh community, for want of which the great mass of the community were going astray. He cordially welcomed the idea. I also took into confidence Professor Niranjana Singh, M. Sc., then of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, and his brother Master Tara Singh, younger brothers of my deceased pupil and friend Ganga Singh. They also promised support. Strengthened with this warm sympathy, I proceeded to Lahore and asked half a dozen friends to place some money in my hands to give shape to my venture. In the course of a week or so, the contributions received amounted to one thousand rupees. A printing firm on the premises of the 'Palms', wherein I was then putting up with my cousin, Bhagat Ishwar Das, M.A., its proprietor, offered to execute the work with necessary promptitude. Thus on the 17th of January, 1929, the *Khalsa* reappeared on *Gur-Saptmi*.\* I thought its appearance would be welcomed by all the educated gentry. But this was not the case. Impressionable Sikh youth receiving instruction in the various colleges at Lahore and elsewhere, were directly under the influence of Non-Sikh professors and they readily acquiesced to whatever was shoved into their heads. I

\*Poh Sudi 7, 1985 Bikrami, birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh.

majority of cases, therefore, they had lost that touch with genuine Sikh teaching which acts like Promethean fire. Never in life I had anything to do with politics. I had never bothered my head to know what the term really signified. But from my boyhood upwards, my instinct and training under best auspices had naturally created in my mind a sort of apathy for all sorts of stunts and shows. The very heading of the leading article, *Calcutta Tamasha*, was already a sort of satire inviting ridicule on the Congress President, Pandit Moti Lal Nehru, being carried in a landou drawn by 30 horses, followed by a huge crowd, rending the air with their favourite slogans. If by this stunt, said I, the Congress leaders wanted to overawe their British over-lords, they were sadly mistaken. The arms of British octopus were deep rooted in the Indian soil and no roaring or drum-beating would have any cowering influence over it. The best course, I said, would be to co-operate with the British satraps and wrest from them power and influence through whole-hearted effort for common-weal. Any other endeavour to stir up bad blood was a pure fatuity. But all that I said fell flat on most of those whom I sought to keep within the Khalsa fold. I, however, paid no heed to the scandal-mongers who spread the vile report that as a Government pensioner, I had been specially deputed to oppose the National Freedom Movement, for this was a mere fabrication. The men who spread such reports could be counted on fingers. And what is more interesting even these carping tongues found some excuse or other to fawn upon me and praise me for my independent outlook of Indian public life. I saw a few well-off and well-educated local Sikh officials and non-officials both and asked them to subscribe to my journal, but they politely excused themselves with the simple remark that what they liked was a daily paper like the *Tribune* or the *Civil & Military Gazette*. And when I told them that my paper was not a newspaper but a viewpaper, like the *Harijan* of Mahatma Gandhi, it was truth pure and simple, which stood far above considerations of time and place, the response was a bland smile. Undismayed by the attitude of these callous individuals, I went on scattering my heart-pourings from week to week. And I soon found that among my readers there were at least three or four



hundred people who enthusiastically read what I wrote and even eulogized my selfless activities. But I needed no approbation or disapprobation. Mine was an eternal song, a replica of the Great Guru Govind Singh's holy word. The columns of the *Khalsa*, too... prosaic language, were mostly rendering into simple understandable English of choice excerpts from *Bachittar Nalak*, *Akal Uslat*, etc. embodying Guru Govind Singh's oft-repeated prayers to Akal Purkh for grant of strength to up-root evil and establish righteousness. He invoked the Creator as All-Steel, as *Sant-Ubhar* (the Uplifter of Saints) and as *Ghaniman-Gar* (Vanquisher of Enemies)<sup>10</sup>. Like the holy Guru, I wished and prayed that the Guru's followers imbibed his spirit, lived like him and died like him, reverently praying to the Almighty Lord to so ordain that when their end drew near they might die fighting in a pitched battle.\* This *Mantram*, I believed, would be efficacious in destroying all venoms so sedulously spread by propagandists of non-violence non-co-operation which are bound to emasculate whole communities and nations. After over three years of this constructive work, when I saw that non-co-operation *jathas* no longer stalked over the province ghoul-like, I relinquished the editing of my journal and, instead of closing it, I transferred it to the son of an old acquaintance who unable to maintain it has elected to bury it and loves to exhume it and makes it dance spectre like to the consternation and dismay of the gaping spectators. This is the fate of my offspring at the hands of the man to whom I made a gift of it.

**MY SOJOURN IN KASHMERE** It was time I had rest and so I  
**FROM APRIL 1932 TO** found myself in Kashmere early  
**OCTOBER 1936** ... May 2 Unlike the ix

months I spent in this valley in 1928, when abnormal heavy rains had worked havoc throughout it, my sojourn in Baramulla was a uniform and unbroken era of serenity and bliss. Early in the dawn as I resumed my walk on the Srinagar road, the first thing that caught my eyes was the snow-clad mountain, the seat of God, who

\**Chatidi Charitra*, Uhi Bilas, 231.

[beckoned me to run up to his holy temple and view the beauty of [the charming valley from within its precincts. And as I cast my I look towards the north I was confronted by the high peaks of hills, the scene of any number of German fruitless scientific expeditions to explore its heights. I had read detailed reports of these expeditions in a beautifully printed big volume costing about fifty rupees [which had been presented by an officer of the exploring parties to *iSardar Sahib* Sardar Thakar Singh, retired Settlement Officer, Kashmere, who had given it to me to beguile my time. I am sorry that this jewel, for indeed it was so to me, Sardar Sahib should have lost. Latterly he gave it to some one, who never returned it. But I am digressing. I was saying that as I looked at those peaks I daily reviewed the expeditions erstwhile conducted by the German savants and marvelled at their industry and the countless sacrifices they had made in the pursuit of their aim. And I remember now with what a heavy heart I wended my way back to the place of my residence.

I should state here that though my outings in the morning and evening high up on the hills on Gulmarg side or on the bank of the Jhelum river for at least a couple of miles daily were child-like attempts to bring down the moon and place it on the teapoy in the front or the rambles of a young or an elderly man to pick up jewels thrown from the stellar regions, my place of abode was a seat of joy. As I sat on the *takht-posh* in the vast garden placed at my disposal by Sardar Sahib Sardar Thakar Singh, friends made it a duty to favour me with their visits. Seated around me in cushioned chairs, they presented the appearance of the Darbar of Savants for they were highly cultured. There were among them men of such high lineage as the late Sardar Harbans Singh of Atari, who had become deeply attached to me, the late *Sardar Bahadur* Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha\* who stayed with me for about eighteen days or so, and

\*Sardar Bahadur Bhai Kahan Singh (of Nabha), son of Bhai Narain Singh, was born in 1861 at the village of Sabz Benara, five miles to the east of Nabha. He received his early education in Panjabi and Sanskrit under the best scho-

[Continued on the next page.

who with his handsome figure looked like a grand old potentate and who regaled me with stories and anecdotes in his inimitably picturesque style. To bear him company came Sardar Gurmukh Singh retired Divisional Engineer, sweet like honey, and his inseparable companion Dr. Chanan Singh, retired Assistant Surgeon, T.J., who as his name signified had a sun-shiny face always wreathing his smiles. It was here in this grove that Mr. Saint Nihal Singh and his wife, the world famous journalists, and Prof. Ganda Singh of the Khalsa College, Amritsar, once let me have the pleasure of their company. The last year of my sojourn, I spent in the newly built *kothi* of my old pupil and friend Principal Jodh Singh, M.A., of Khalsa College, Amritsar, to whom I am indebted for his show

*[Continued from the last page.]*

lars of his day and learnt music with Mahant Gajja Singh of Guru-sar Mali raj. He studied Persian at Delhi and Lahore, where he also learnt English. As a man of literary taste and a scholar of Sikh literature, he was selected by Maharaja Hira Singh of Nabha as a tutor for his son, Ripudaman Singh. He served the Nabha and Patiala states in various capacities and rose to be the Foreign Minister of Nabha. He was primarily a man of letters and was a close associate of Mr. M. A. Macauliffe, the author of the six-volume *Sikh Religion*, published in 1909. Bhai Kahan Singh's *Ham Hindu Nahin* (that is, the Sikhs are not Hindus), 1897, was his first important book followed by *Gurmat Prabhakar* (1898) and *Gurmat Sudhakar* (1899). These were later on compressed into *Gurmat Martand* published by the S. G. P. C. in 1904. His *Gur Sabdaratanhar Mqihankosh* (the *Encyclopaedia of Sikh Literature*) is a monumental work of permanent value, first published in 1930 in four volumes and reprinted in one volume in 1960. He has also written several other books on grammar, poetry, astronomy, travel, etc. He died at Nabha on November 23, 1938.

Bhai Jodh Singh, son of Bakshi Ram Singh of Ghungrila, district Rawalpindi, was born on May 31, 1882. Having received elementary education at the village Primary School, he joined the Mission School, Rawalpindi, in 1892 and passed his Intermediate from the Gordon Mission College in 1902. He graduated from the Khalsa College, Amritsar, in 1904, standing first in the province and winning Fuller's Exhibition. He studied Mathematics for a year, 1904-05, in the Forman Christian College, Lahore, and passed his M.A. privately, in 1906, again standing first in the province. He worked as Professor of Divinity and Mathematics at the Khalsa College, Amritsar, from 1905 to 1913, as Headmaster of the Khalsa High School, Lyallpur, from September,

*[Continued on the next page.]*

me the famous sights of Gulmarg. It was in Jodh Singh's house in Baramulla that I renewed my acquaintance with his friend *Rai Bahadur* Ishwar Das, M.A., a son of an old friend of mine at Moga.

It was time I now thought that I should retire to my home in Rawalpindi, give up all gadding about and end my days there.

**MY LIFE'S** Quite an interesting fate here awaited me.

**LAST STAGE** God is great ! In the quarrel of the Pandavas and the Kauravas, He appeared as an incarnation of Vishnu in the person of Shri Krishna and helped the Pandavas in

*[Continued from the last page.]*

1914 to February, 1920, and as Principal of the Guru Nanak Khalsa College Gujranwala, from February, 1920, to October, 1921. He was then called upon to take up the editorship of the Punjabi daily, *the Khalsa*, of Amritsar and on its discontinuation towards the end of 1923, he became Assistant Secretary of the Sikh Educational Committee and Inspector of the Sikh Schools. In 1923 he was elected to the Panjab Legislative Council and in 1924 he was re-appointed as a Professor in the Khalsa College, Amritsar. On the retirement of *Sardar Bahadur* Bishan Singh, I.E.S., in 1936, he rose to the position of the Principal which he held up to 1952. He is one of the most distinguished scholars of Sikh philosophy and an eminent educationist of the province. He has always taken keen interest in the affairs of the Panjab University and has been a Fellow since 1926 and a Syndic since 1934. He was thrice elected President of the Sikh Educational Conference (1921, 1939, 1946). In recognition of his services to the cause of education in the province, the Punjab Government, on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor of the Panjab University, Mian Afzal Husain, honoured him with the title of *Sardar Bahadur* on January 1, 1943. In 1957 he was nominated to the Panjab Legislative Assembly and in 1960 to the Panjab Legislative Council. The writer of these lines remembers to have heard the great Bengal leader, Mr. J. M. Sen-Gupta say: 'If Jodh Singh had been born in Bengal, we would have raised him to the heavens.' The late Lala Hardyal is said to have once remarked that Bhai Jodh Singh was the one man in the Panjab who could successfully guide the destinies of the province in the field of politics. But active politics is not in his line and he has generally kept away from it. For his services to the cause of education, the Panjab University, Chandigarh, conferred upon him on December 23, 1961, the degree of Doctor of Literature (*Honoris Causa*). He is now, March 1965, the Vice-Chancellor of the Punjabi University, Patiala, established in April, 1962.—G.

the war of Mahabharat and won them back their kingdom. But he chose to leave me alone and helped a first cousin of mine on father side, whose name I advisedly refrain from placing on record here, to divest me of my landed property worth about a lac of rupees, that I had acquired with savings of a long life of thrift and parsimony, without even raising a finger. The truthful Yudhishtira was provided with a *biwan* (a bye-plane) to fly over the snow-clad Himalayas to seek a restful abode there. But whether a *biwan* will be vouchsafed to me who likewise spent a whole life in search of truth is known only to gods. Well might I cry Vanity ! Vanity!! AH is  
 V a n i t y M [1.10.1942.]

## CHAPTER LX

## SHAHIDGANJ i LAHORE AGITATION

This is the close of the year 1935 A. D. Strange things are happening. There is a Sikh shrine, called Shahidganj, near the Railway Station, Lahore, sacred to the memory of Bhai Taru Singh, the famous Sikh martyr. Any number of other Sikhs, young and old, were martyred here during the regimes of Nawabs Zakariya Khan and Yahiya Khan, governors of Lahore.! The place, therefore, was called *Shahidganj*, the place of martyrs, and naturally became sacred to the Sikhs, and from the commencement of the Sikh Government of the Khalsa down to this day has been in the possession of the Sikhs. Since the advent of the British rule Muslims have several times sued the men in charge of the temple for its possession, but the civil courts invariably dismissed these suits. In July last the local Gurdwara Committee, now in charge of the temple, dismantled an old mosque-shaped edifice on the premises, believed to be the old court of the Muslim *Qazis*, wherein they sat to pronounce their judgments on the cases brought against the Sikhs and put their victims to the crudest of deaths. A huge mound

fThe execution of Sikhs at the site of Shahidganj began during the governorship of Abdus Samad Khan (1715-1726). An order for a whole-sale massacre of the Sikhs was at first issued by Emperor Bahadur Shah on December 10, 1710, and was repeated by Emperor Farrukh Siyar during his time. The massacres continued up to and during the governorship of Mir Muin-ul-Mulk, popularly known as Mir Minim (1748-1753), and ended only with his death on November 4, 1753. For a detailed account of Shahidganj, Lahore, and Mir Mannu, see Ganda Singh's *History of the Gurdwara Shahidganj, Lahore*, 1935, and Ahmad Shah Durrani, 1959.—G.

of bones found from underneath the ground floor of the building j a convincing proof, indeed, if one was required, that it was not place of Muslim worship. But notwithstanding this some Muslim agitators and their press were loud in their condemnation of the demolition of the buildings. No wonder that huge crowds of Muslims, drawn from the Delhi, Akbari and Mochi gates and the Landa Bazar areas and from other parts of Lahore and its suburbs marched towards the Shahidganj to turn out Sikh custodians of the building under dispute. The Government was not unprepared to meet this crisis. Special police and military were requisitioned and the situation was controlled, but not till a few rounds of shots were fired, resulting in a small number of casualties. This added fuel to the fire. There was a mild agitation against the Government, but the feelings against the Sikhs ran high, so much so that cold-blooded murder of innocent Sikh passers-by, who were not even residents of Lahore and had nothing to do with the demolition of the alleged mosque, was the order of the day. The Governor, Sir Herbert Emerson, had to meet a very difficult situation. In his speeches and communiques he defended the measures taken by the Government and, while admitting that the Sikhs were within their rights in dealing with the property lawfully in their possession in any way they liked, they were wrong 'morally', he declared, in doing an act whereby they had injured the susceptibilities of their Muslim countrymen. This was an appeal to the good sense of the Sikh community and it seemed to have had a good effect on them, but the Muslim feeling in Lahore and particularly in the Western Frontier districts became much acute. In the latter region the Government had to wage a regular war to put down the Frontier fanatics, but in Lahore the situation has not improved. The agitators invited Pir Jamait Ali Shah of Sialkot, the *Amir-ul-Mill at* (sovereign of the community of the faithful), who, instead of pouring oil on troubled waters, set ablaze the whole communal horizon by making inflammatory speeches in the Badshahi mosque, and by enjoining on the assemblage, said to have consisted of thousands of the worshippers, a boycott of the Sikhs and Hindus. The Government made blunder after blunder. Without waiting to see the general trend of events it ordered the transfer of a magnificent

domed building where the present Sessions Court is held, to the Musalmans, as a reward for their supposed patience and forbearance.

Another act of a similar nature was removing the ban on the carrying of swords throughout the province. Shortly after a huge procession-of-several thousand men, carrying swords, hatchets, etc., headed by Maulana Shaukat Ali and other Muslim M.L.A.s, passed through the bazars of Lahore brandishing their weapons and shouting '*Ya Ali*', '*Ya AW*' and repeating other exciting slogans, with the intent to overawe Hindu and Sikh populace. The Sikhs were not slow in organizing a counter-demonstration. During the last week of November, 1935, they marched out in procession from the Shahidganj Gurdwara, on the Martyrdom day of Guru Tegh Bahadur, and passed through the bazars of Lahore. Some Hindus also joined the procession. The organizers, it seems to me, were wrong in permitting this coalition. They had a wonderful control over the various Sikh *jathas*; but they should have known that stray Hindu processionists of Mahabir Dal mentality owed them no allegiance. They had joined the procession from the purest of motives, but they lacked Sikh training and forbearance and were wanting in self-control under grave provocation. Hence there was no wonder if among such slogans as : *Sura so pahchaniye jo lare din ke het* (Hero is he who fights for the weak), such provoking slogans should have been heard as, for instance : "*Chhuri mar ki pagal bande man de babar-sheer ih* (The cowardly murderers stab innocent passers-by and when arrested pretend lunacy. Truly they are cubs of brave lionesses !). One couldn't help laughing when one heard : *Hindu qaum ka bachcha bachcha sheer ki santan hai* (Each and every Hindu is a cub of lioness). I was with the procession from the Lahori Gate to Dehra Sahib Gurdwara near the Fort. When "I met Master Tara Singh,\*

•Master Tara Singh is a prominent figure among the Sikhs. He was born on 6th June, 1885, in a Hindu family of Harial in the district of Rawal-

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a prominent neo-Akali leader, I invited his attention to this undesirable feature of the procession. He agreed with me in my belief that it was a mistake to have allowed irresponsible Hindu youngmen to participate in the procession and said that there had been a clash on this account near the Michi Gate. But my fears were realized next day. Early in the morning big crowd of armed Muslims from inside Bhati Gate waylaid stray Sikh and Hindu passers-by and assaulted them with fatal consequences. A vast multitude entered the Guru Datta Bhawan, an Arya Samajist meeting place, and assaulted the innocent inmates. The authorities had profited from their previous mistakes. They succeeded in controlling the situation. A curfew order was issued and for weeks groups of more than five persons were not allowed to pass through the streets of Lahore. The carrying of *lathis*, swords and even; *Kir pans* was disallowed. Naturally the Sikhs regarded this ban on *Kirpan* as an interference with their religion. The Shromani

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pindi. His father Gopi Chand, was a petty shopkeeper. Nanak Chand, as Master Tara Singh was then called, received his elementary education in the District Board School of his village and passed the Matriculation examination in 1903 from the Christian Mission School, Rawalpindi. He graduated from the Khalsa College, Amritsar, in 1907 and obtained his Training degree in the following year. Finding the Khalsa School, Lyallpur, in a tottering financial condition, Tara Singh accepted its Headmastership with a nominal honorarium of Rs. 15/- p. m. Later on he served in the Khalsa schools of Kallar (Rawalpindi) and Chak No. 41 in the Lyallpur district. His religio-political activities began in 1921, the year of Nankana Sahib tragedy. On October 2, 1926, he was elected as Vice-President of the Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee and continued in that position up to October 12, 1933, when he became its President. He was again elected as President of the S. G. P. C. on June 13, 1936, and continued to hold that position for over two decades in addition to being the *Jathedar* of the Shromani Akali Dal.

He played a conspicuous part in opposing the inclusion of the whole of the Punjab and Bengal in Pakistan in 1947 and helped save parts of them for India. But his hunger for power and self-conceited policies have created unbridgeable dissensions in the community and his political somersaults have caused a harmful set-back to the solidarity and prestige of the Panth.-G.

Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee decided to offer *Satyagraha* and all parties of Sikhs, under the leadership of its members and other prominent members of the community and even Sikh ladies, marched out to show their prowess. The authorities convicted them all. The agitation continued throughout the period the ban lasted. Deputations waited on the Governor, Sir Herbert Emerson, with the object of getting the ban on the *Kirpan* lifted. The Sikh press, even the Hindu press, with one voice, condemned the Government action. But their criticism was unheeded. The Government, however, dealt with the Sikh *Satyagrahis* with remarkable leniency. The members of the *jalhas* were invariably awarded a day's imprisonment till the rising of the court. This whole comic affair ended only with the ending of the prescribed period of the ban.

This demon of *Satyagraha*, however, not unlike its prototypes of the mythological ages, is a surprizingly clever monster. It assumes now one form and now another and it is difficult to say how long it will go on plying its trade. The Musalmans, taking a clue from their Sikh opponents, have begun starting civil disobedience and marching towards Bhai Taru Singh's Shahidganj with a view to offering their prayers there. Like Sikh *Satyagrahis* who, when produced before the trying magistrates, gave out their names as *Dilli Tor Singh, Hakumat Bhaga Singh, Kan-Mar or Singh* and so forth, the Musalman *Satyagrahis* give their names as *Kafar-mar Khan, Bul-shikan Khan* and the like and their father's name as *Baba Adam* and place of birth as *Shahidganj*. How long this imitation game will last is yet to be seen.\* But this much is certain that

\*When despaired of taking possession of Shahidganj from the Sikhs by force, the Muslims filed a suit on 30th October, 1935, in the Court of the District Judge, Lahore, against the Shromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, not for possession of the site or ejectment of the Sikhs, evidently because all such attempts had in the past failed, but for right of Muslim worship and for a mandatory injunction for the reconstruction of the building. The learned District Judge, Mr. Sale, dismissed the suit by decree dated 25th May, 1936, and an appeal to the High Court was dismissed on 26th January, 1938, by Chief Justice Young and Justice Bhide. An appeal. No. 91 of 1938,

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the internal situation in the Punjab promises to be becoming delicate and he will be a bold man who prophesies the lifting of the clouds from over the province and the readvent of a sunshiny weather.

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was then made by the Muslims to the Privy Council, and the Lords of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, in their Judgment delivered on 2nd May, 1940, upheld the Sikh right and dismissed the appeal of the Muslims with costs. Thus ended for ever one great cause of communal tension between the Muslims and the Sikhs.

With the partition of the country in 1947 and the transfer of Lahore to Pakistan, the Shahidganj has gone to the Muslim side. It may, however, be said to their credit that they have allowed it to stand in the same condition in which it was left by the Sikhs in August, 1947.—G.

## CHAPTER LXI

### THE GLITTER OF GURDWARAS GOLD

#### MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

As I am writing the whole country is bemoaning the demise of King Emperor George V. Even the head pontiff of the Congress school of thought, Mahatma Gandhi, whose aim is the attainment of *Pur an Swaraj* (complete independence) for India has telegraphed his respectful condolence to the Viceroy with the request that the same be conveyed to the members of the bereaved royal family. To an un-initiated person the psychology of such a mentality is incomprehensible.

As was feared from the very commencement, the Sikh Gurdwara Act has created this year (1936 A. D.) a very unpleasant situation. During the present three years term the various Gurdwara committees, with few exceptions, have been playing ducks and drakes with Gurdwara funds, with the result that some men responsible for this unsatisfactory state of affairs are in the grips of the custodians of law. The result is apparent. Some will go to jail and some might be acquitted. But will this serve as a satisfactory cure for the evil inherent in the very constitution. When you allow franchise to an illiterate people, devoid of any sense of responsibility, you must be very innocent, indeed, if you do not foresee that this vote will go to the highest bidder or the cleverest propagandist, as is the case all over the world, where western institutions are cherished as a fetish. The cry of the Sikh journals that in the recent Gurdwara elections men have been returned who are not only not baptized Sikhs, but also deny belief in Godhead, is an idle one. They do not see that there is no help to it. The Sikh community is not one uniform compact body as organized by the Tenth Guru. It is divided into any number of component parts, *Khalsas*, *Nirmalas*, *Sahjdharis*, *Namdharis*, *Nirankaris* and the recently established associations believing in communism, such as *Kirti Kisans* (peasant

workers), the Nationalists who claim to be Indians first and Sikhs afterwards, and another party of more recent origin, the Rural party, formed on the so-called economic basis, but which strongly believe in Jatism and would gleefully sacrifice Sikhism at its altar with the fervour of a votary of the goddess Kali. To expect from this medley of groups and sub-groups any very correct appraisal of the right of vote and a discrimination in its exercise is as good as a moon-shine. Religion with most people is merely an outer veneer. For self and power men kill and destroy their own kith and kin with more than brutal ferocity; take for instance the war that is being waged on by Christian Italy against Christian Abyssinia. Men who work western institutions make themselves ridiculous when they make wry faces at the inevitable results of those institutions.

True, the great Guru Gobind Singh threw his accumulated treasure of offerings into the Sutlej. True also, the forbears of the present day Sikhs dreaded Gurdwaras gold as if it were a deadly poison. But that is past history. Some of the present day Sikhs are out for a game and they will play it under present day rules and etiquette.

If you want to truly judge them and see them with the eye of an art-connoisseur you will find the whole thing truly a delightful comedy and instead of shedding tears of blood like the writer of the *Khalsa Samachar*, Amritsar, at the seeming moral decadence of the modern Sikhs you will be more than men if you do not loudly acclaim their wonderful performance, even roar with laughter till you swoon out of sheer exhaustion. You have on the stage a number of persons showering jewels fairie-like and scattering splendour all round. Their pets and pages and hangers-on so obtrusively revel in glory. Little wonder if all this blaze and radiance should engender the urge to possess it and men from amongst the spectators should break all barriers and scramble with child-like simplicity to snatch the gewgaws. The Muslim dancing girl, who was challenged for impersonation, excited merriment when she so naively protested her innocence and said to the polling officer "*Allah di sauh, main Sikhni han* (By Allah, I am a Sikh!)" was only a pawn in the game and she played her part with mirthful skill.

**DR. TAGORE'S** Dr. Rabindra Nath Tagore, the great Indian poet and scholar of world-wide renown, in an interview with a representative of the Associated Press of India the [other day at Patna is reported to have said :

"The greatest problem of our country, in my opinion, is the Spirit of dissension prevalent widely *not only among the different communities, but also among the different sections of the same community. I do not know if this is inherent in our nature that we cannot combine if only for the purpose of self-protection. It has happened throughout our history that, even when faced with the gravest catastrophies, we have failed to combine and offer a united stand and thus we have been defeated. I am afraid that the deficiency in our nature still persists. There are signs enough to make me pessimistic. In all our national movements and institutions this deficiency finds expression and makes it really impossible to realise the full satisfaction of our efforts. We cannot dismiss lightly the well known jealous rivalries amongst different factions of the Congress. Moreover we have a growing feeling of provincial separatism, which cuts at the very root of our loudly protested national unity.* If we have the feeling that our interests are conflicting and antagonistic then it is useless to talk about national unity. There is no example in history of any people having attained greatness when they were themselves divided into factions. They have always been dominated by outside forces and never attained real independence. The situation in China, with which I am somewhat familiar, offers a parallel example. A few ambitious politicians are trying to grab all power in the land [causing interminable fights and endless sufferings to the poor people. *China's greatest trouble is her rivalries. Such may be our lot too, when we have more political power in our hands.* People do not [know their own interests and are often *deluded by their self-appointed custodians. Therefore, our real problem is the problem of education.*

"*The people must know themselves, must know for themselves what is good and desirable, and forge ahead with their own strength. Let us learn the supreme lesson, which China offers us.*" [The Tribune,

March 18, 1936. J

The italics are mine. I have put in this long extract because the remarks therein proceed from a man who, to use the language of the *Tribune*, happens to be one of the greatest of India's own sons one in whom not only Indian humanity, but Indian patriotism have reached the high watermark. But the learned writer of the *Tribune* stultifies the aim of the distinguished poet's utterances when, while saying that "No Indian who loves his country and yearns for her freedom can fail to lay to heart the words of earnest and impressive warning which the poet has uttered," and that "the country can ignore his wise and sagacious counsel only at its peril," simultaneously opines that we, "for our part, do not see any occasion for either pessimism, or despair." This is only what the logicians call *Reductio ad absurdum*. The poet has rightly understood the situation, or he has only repeated without proper investigation and critical analysis what, to again quote the comments of the learned writer of the *Tribune*, "our foreign mentors, with most of whom the wish is father to the thought, have been telling us." But if the poet is right, as would be apparent to any but those whose vision is blurred for some reason or other, "the country can ignore his wise and sagacious counsel only at its peril," as the learned writer of the *Tribune* so pithily and truly observes and proceeds to his concluding remarks by warning his countrymen against laying the "flattering unction to their soul that all their set-back is due to the presence of the third party, and that the moment the third party disappears the spirit of dissension will end." Equally vain is the learned writer's pious wish that because notwithstanding internal dissensions any number of countries in Europe and America, and even in Asia, Japan, for instance, have risen to power, ... India, too, will gain freedom some day *ipso facto*. He loses sight of the fact that in no other country in the world humanity is so divided and sub-divided as in India, and nowhere else the feelings of antipathy between man and man have worked such a havoc as in India. The much desired and long-cherished hope of a self-respecting self-denying, and free India, if it is not to prove a dream, must have well-knit, solid, rocky foundations. A mere pious hope can afford little consolation to any thinking Indian.

CONGRESS'S LAST DICE THROW This is 1942 A. D. The non-violent, non-co-operation movement of the Indian National Congress reached its climax in August last when it passed a resolution, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, in which the British Government was asked to quit India and to transfer government of India to it as representative of the Indian people. This was the last throw of the Congress dice. The response of the British Government was quick. Mahatma Gandhi with his chosen colleagues is clapped behind the bars of Indian jails. Their followers outside in exasperation have started burning and plunder. The Government, on its part, is exhausting all its resources in putting down the agitation. Among the victims are thousands of poor peasants and mill-hands who have risen against their capitalist masters and police forces engaged in putting down the insurrection. There are so many good and great people among the Indian nationalists. How one wished they understood the patent truth that freedom has to be snatched. It does not come as a gift. Never in all history such was the case. It goes to the Victor.

These pages will not be complete unless I herein avail myself of the opportunity to express my gratefulness to *Akal Purkh* for vouchsafing a prolonged career of usefulness to the community and the country generally to my life-long friend Hon'ble Sardar Sir Jogendra Singh to declare from his exalted position as Education Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council his unbreakable faith in the unity of India and his resolute intent to oppose all attempts to partition the country and to his reliance in the ability of the Sikh Panth to confront all efforts to thrust on the unwilling political groups of the country such ridiculous schemes as Pakistan as he did in his address to the alumni of the Hindu College, Delhi, recently. Mr. Muhammad Ali Jinnah is really frightening the nationalist India while battling with the wind and flaunting his miasmatic schemes. I am likewise glad that Hon'ble Sardar Baldev Singh, Development Minister of the Unionist Government of the Punjab, is not less outspoken in his condemnation of the Jinnah imbroglio.

[Montgomery, 28-11-1942.]



**APPENDIX I**  
**AN UNTRUTH EXPOSED**

[The following note was originally written by Bhagat Lakshman Singh in December, 1932, in the form of a paper for the press to controvert the erroneous views of Lala Ram Chand Manchanda, expressed in an article on *Guru Nanak and His Mission* published in the *Khalsa* of November 13 (*Guru Nanak Number*) of that year. It is appended here to give to the reader truthful information from the pen of one who had intimate knowledge of the men behind the Singh Sabha movement.]

The *Guru Nanak Number* of the *Khalsa* for this year [1932] publishes a paper on *Guru Nanak and His Mission* from the pen of Lala Ram Chand Manchanda, Advocate, Lahore. From my slight acquaintance with him I had formed a flattering opinion of Mr Manchanda's breadth of vision and liberality of mind. I was, therefore, not a little shocked to find him indulging in captious criticism of men and things about which he apparently knows little. His knowledge of Sikh chronology is very poor indeed. He is wrong in accepting as gospel truth the canard saying that the year 1893 of the Christian era gave birth to the Sikh separatist movement and that it was the [British] Government which fathered this idea on the Sikh public workers of those days. The fact, on the other hand, is that it was Baba Nanak himself who conceived the idea of establishing a separate church. His successors continued the work and the last one, the great Guru Govind Singh, gave it a final and distinct shape. "Both these churches (Hindu and Musalman)", according to him, "practised sophistry. He, therefore, gave prominence to a third church in the world" [Gurdas, 41-8]. In making the preaching of the distinctiveness of the Sikh creed as their principal plank in their propaganda of reform from the commencement of the early seventies the pioneers of the Sikh renaissance—I mean the leaders of the Singh Sabha movement—had only resumed the work that had been suspended with the tragic

end of the last Guru as a result of the malevolent intrigues of his Sodhi collaterals and the Hindu Rajas of the Shivalaks. The Singh Sabha movement, no doubt, received great impetus from the liberal western education and *Pax Britannica* like those of the Brahmo Samaj, the Arya Samaj and the Anjuman-i-Islamia, under the lead of distinguished workers like Babu Keshub Chander Sen Swami Dayananda and Sir Sayyad Ahamd Khan. The imputation of any other motive to the Sikh contemporary workers is a gross libel, to say the least. Mr Manchanda has, perhaps, borrowed this wrongful allegation from our friends of the Arya Samaj who left no stone unturned to ridicule Sikhs and Sikhism and to thwart the efforts of the Sikhs in the eighties and ninties of the last century to have a college of their own at Lahore and resorted to all sorts of base means. I say this from personal knowledge.

The fact really is, and I am sorry to have to say this, that the Hindu mind suffers from a sort of atavism. It is so fitful. But for this morbidity, it would be such a valuable factor in the evolution of human thought. While human mind elsewhere has cast off its old spectacles and has begun to view things through the latest and up-to-date appliances, the Hindu mind peevishly sticks to its time-honoured opaque glasses. Hence its blurred vision.

Baba Nanak, says he, "was a Bedi Khatri of the solar race and all his successors were Khatri. This was a movement of reformation commenced and kept up by ten generations of Khatri. This Guru composed and sang hymns in this land of the Punjab as the *Rishis* of the Vedic times did. ... In the most critical period of the life of the Hindus the Gurus successfully acted as their saviours and earned their gratitude for all times". All this is very flattering indeed. But it is a bad logic. From the mere accident of the Gurus having been born as Khatri and their preaching religious truth in a land where the Rishis composed and sang Vedic hymns, it does not necessarily follow that the Sikh truth was identically the same as revealed to the ancient Rishis. Nor does it stand to reason to suppose that the mere fact that the Gurus were born Khatri and they and their followers never lost an opportunity to protect the Hindus from Muslim oppression, made it incumbent on them to

subordinate their religious beliefs to those of the Hindus and regard themselves as an integral part of the Hindu community. It was a mere accident that the Gurus were born Khatri, but they never made much of it. On the contrary they have condemned Hindu caste-pride in most unmistakable terms. To propound the view that the Gurus were good and great because they belonged to the solar race is to interpret history quite wrongly. No Sikh, however, would take this view for a minute. To the Sikhs the Gurus were good and great because they were men of God who, like Him, loved all human beings as their own kith and kin, their own part and parcel. Had there been any very particular nobility in the solar race it would not have given birth to Prithi Chand Sodhi, Guru Arjan's own elder brother, who devoted his whole life in conspiring against him and who was base enough in plotting the murder of his own nephew, the future Guru Hargobind.

Chandu Lai, Emperor Jehangir's minion in authority at Lahore who so ruthlessly subjected Guru Arjan to unspeakable tortures was also a luminary of the great solar race. So much for Mr Mamchanda's theory of the innate goodness of the Gurus as a result of their lineage from the solar dynasty.

Now this rodomontade, for that it is undoubtedly, if it means anything, is a clumsy attempt to convey the idea that Hinduism and Sikhism are convertible terms connoting one and the same concept and that Guru Nanak had no distinctive truth to promulgate and the Church established by him did not differ in its essentials from what the Hindu Church stood for. It is too late in the day to ply this soap bubble. It was pricked decades ago. I am sure, no honest Hindu or Sikh would favour the idea of one's religious convictions to bolster up any pseudo-political compact. A Sikh would follow Guru Nanak and a Hindu his own *Avatars*. Surely there is nothing to prevent any sane person from fraternizing with the believers in any truly religious dogma and sharing civic rights on equal terms with his or her fellow-beings while following the dictates of conscience in the matter of religious convictions. But unfortunately there are a certain class of people to whom diversity in religious beliefs is what a red rag is to a bull.

The late Mr Macauliffe did visit me perhaps once or twice in the office of the Punjab Mutual Hindu Family Relief Fund, Lahore of which I was then Secretary, but that was in connection with his desire for an appreciative note from me about his voluminous and esteemable work which I readily and gladly gave and to which he gave a prominent place in the first volume. I, later, saw him several times in the Neadow's Hotel, Lahore, and spent a couple of months with him at Amritsar, but that was in connection with my translation of *Japji* which forms part of the first volume and which he adopted after discussing each word and line of it with a council of eminent Sikh scholars like the late Giani Sardul Singh, Giani Hazara Singh of Amritsar and dozens of other distinguished Sikhs, one of whom was Mahant Prem Singh of Sialkot. But at no time our conversation bordered on politics. Again he was not at all in the go books of the powers of that day. The Government has throughout acknowledged the services of oriental scholars and has sought to encourage them, but Mr Macauliffe it almost hated, if I can use the expression, perhaps, because he laid too much stress on the incorrectness of Dr Trump's translation of the *Adi Granth Sahib* for which the Government had advanced about half a lac of rupees, if I remember aright. To Mr Macauliffe the Government offered Rs. 5000/- only which he indignantly refused. To the last day of his sojourn in this country he tried for a recognition of his services, but no heed was paid to his representations in this behalf. I have written all this at length to refute the idea that Mr Macauliffe was a Government spy and that he put the notion into the mind of the Sikhs that they were not Hindus but Sikhs. I can say from my personal knowledge of him that Mr Macauliffe was a man of independent views and independent means. He spent more than 30 years of his life on the study of Sikh scriptures and Sikh history and eventually died as a Sikh. When for the last time I met him at a hotel in Rawalpindi, during the days of the first session of the Sikh Educational Conference there, he told me that he had become a convert to Sikhism and for this he was treated as an outcaste by his countrymen, pointing with his finger at a group of Europeans who were then dining on the lawn outside. That it is to the interest of the Government to follow

the policy of "Divide and Rule", I would at once concede. It is to the interest of the Government, as of all governments, to believe in and pursue such a policy. But I shall never let any opportunity pass without controverting the absolutely wrong view that any Sikh of note, who was associated with the Singh Sabha movement, was influenced in his ideas by any member of the Government or any non-official such as Mr Macauliffe was during the days when he was working on his *Sikh Religion*.

If Mr Manchanda is an Arya Smajist he does not require to be told that his leader Swami Dayananda was, likewise, looked upon as a Government spy by the Sanatanists of his time. I was then a lad of 14 or 15. Hearing that the great Swami was a spy, I was filled with a curiosity and went to see how he looked, for I took at that time that a spy was something frightful which had alarmed so many distinguished Sadhus and Pundits of my native town Rawalpindi. So I took a companion with me and went to see Swamiji. My surprise was great when I found that that much maligned great man was not some hobgoblin, come into the world to inspire terror, but a warm hearted man whose geniality so much impressed me that for weeks afterwards there was not a single day on which I missed his public discourses. And though he never impressed me as did Swami Sampat Giri and Swami Kailash Parbat, the great Sanatan Dharm saints of that time, and though I never liked his tone when dwelling on creeds which he did not favour, I shall never forget that he was a sincere patriot through and through and that all the nonsense talked about his being a spy, deputed by the Christian Government to rob the Hindus of their faith, was so much bosh. Equally bosh I regard the scandalous reference of ill-informed people to the leaders of the Singh Sabha movement who are no longer in the land of the living. In conclusion I would like to say that this so-called separatist movement of the Sikhs is responsible for the establishment of any number of educational institutions and colleges, orphanages and other public institutions, for the enactment of the Anand Marriage Act and the recognition of the Sikh community as an independent political entity both by the rival communities and by the

Government and for a wide awakening in the community j respect of its status among the comity of nations that inhabit in the Punjab, nay in whole India, an achievement of which it has every cause to feel proud.

## APPENDIX II CHRONOLOGY

- 1710 **December 10** (Shawwal 29, Bahadur Shahi 4). Emperor Bahadur Shah ordered a whole-sale massacre of the Sikhs wherever found.
- 1753 **November 4.** Mir Mannu died at Lahore
- 1799 Baba Balak Singh Jagiasi (Abhiasi) of Hazro born
- 1816 **February 3.** Baba Ram Singh born at Bhaini (district Ludhiana)
- 1827 Maulana Muhammad Husain Azad born
- 1832 **February 21.** Baba Khem Singh Bedi born
- 1837 **September 29.** Max Arthur Macauliffe born
- 1838 **September 6.** Maharaja Duleep Singh born
- 1839 **November 25.** Baba Atar Singh Bedi, father of Baba Khem Singh, died
- 1843 Bhai Manna Singh of Rawalpindi born
- 1843 **September 15.** Maharaja Sher Singh killed at Lahore
- 1849 **April.** Bhai Gurmukh Singh, a leader of the Singh Sabha Movement, born at Kapurthala
- 1850 **December 20.** Pandit Shiv Narain Agnihotri (Dev Guru Bhagwan) born at Akbarpur (U.P.)
- 1853 Bhai Dit Singh Gyani born at Anandpur Kalaur
- 1854 Sardar Lehna Singh Majithia died at Benares
- 1855 **January 30.** Baba Dayal Nirankari died
- 1859 Bhai Jawahir Singh born at Amritsar
- 1861 **August 30.** (Bhadon Vadi 10, 1918 Bk.). Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha born
- 1862 **December 1.** Bhai Balak Singh's letter to Sain Jawahar Mall  
**December 6.** Bhai Balak Singh died at Hazro
- 1863 **June 8.** Bhagat Lakhshman Singh born at Rawalpindi
- 1864 **April 13.** Lala Harkishan Lai born at Dera Ismail Khan
- 1866 **March.** Sant Atar Singh born
- 1870 Bhai Takht Singh of Ferozepur born
- 1870 **February 12.** Baba Darbara Singh Nirankari died
- 1872 **January 17-18.** Kukas blown from the guns at Malerkotla

- 1872 **January 18.** Baba Ram Singh exiled from the Punjab  
**February 17.** Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia born
- 1873 **July 28.** First Singh Sabha established at Amritsar
- 1877 Sir Jogendra Singh born  
 Arya Samaj founded at Lahore  
 Teaching of Panjabi introduced in Oriental College, Lahor  
 (established in 1876)  
**June.** Sant Teja Singh (Niranjan Singh Mehta) born
- 1878 **Adi Granth's** translation by Ernest Trump published ' London
- 1879 **November 12.** Singh Sabha established at Lahore
- 1880 **Gurmukhi Akhbar** and **Vidyarak** started
- 1882 **May 31.** Bhai Jodh Singh born at Ghungrila (Rawalpindi)
- 1883 **April 11.** Khalsa Diwan established at Lahore
- 1884 **November 29.** Baba Ram Singh (Kooka) Namdhari died i Burma
- 1885 **June 6.** Master Tara Singh (Nanak Chand) born
- 1887-88 BLS Intermediate student at Government College, Lahor  
 (officiating Principal, Robertson, Feb, 16,1891)
- 1888 **December.** BLS's letter published in the *Indian Magazine*, London  
**November 25.** Pandit Gurudatt and Pandit Lekh Ram attacked Sikhs and Sikhism in the 11th anniversary of the Arya Samaj at Lahore
- 1888-89 Bhagat Lakshman Singh S.A.-V., student at Central Training College, Lahore
- 1889 **November 20.** Chit for BLS from F. Haden-Cope, Principal, Central Training College, Lahore
- 1890 **January 3.** Letter of Rev. Henry Martyn Clark, effort at attracting BLS to Christianity  
**April 21.** Letter of Rev. Henry Martyn Clark informing BLS that his letters were being sent for publication  
**April 23.** Certificate for BLS by Jia Ram  
**April 24.** BLS was Headmaster at M.B. School, Hazro
- 1891 **December 26.** BLS had been in educational service for 2\ or three years
- 1892 **March 5.** Foundation Stone of Khalsa College, Amritsar, laid by Sir James B. Lyall  
**July 27.** BLS in the office of the Executive Engineer, Kohat

- November 27.** BLS in the office of the Superintendent, Post Offices, Simla Division at Kalka
- 1893 BLS Branch Postmaster at Koti, six miles from Kalka  
 BLS Mail Agent at Kumar Hatti, Simla Hills  
**September 14.** Sher Singh, M. Sc., born
- 1893 **October 22.** Maharaja Duleep Singh died in Paris
- 1894 Anglo-Vernacular Primary School established at Kallar  
**December 7.** BLS had served as Teacher and Professor for seven months in the Mission High School and College
- 1895 **February 12.** Service in the Mission School on Rs. 50/- per mensem  
**March 28.** Bhai Gurmukh Singh to Sewa Singh to have applications from good Sikh students requesting the Maharaja of Nabha that his donation be spent on Langar at the Khalsa College
- November 6.** BLS had service in Mission School and College for a year and half
- 1896 **March 1.** Salary raised to Rs. 65/-(letter of Mr Thompson, Manager, Mission School, February 13, 1896)  
**April 1.** Editorship of the *Arjan* offered to BLS. Leave refused to BLS and he continued in service. Mr Morrison's letter of May 5, congratulating BLS
- 1897 **April 1.** Memorial to Deputy Commissioner and President District Board, Rawalpindi, for introduction of Panjabi in the then Anglo-Vernacular Middle School, Gujjarkhan  
**April 4.** Two months' leave from college for the work of Diamond Jubilee Technical Institute, Lahore  
**July 29.** A joint appeal under the signatures of Bhais Manna Singh, Teja Singh Anand and Lakshman Singh issued for collection of money for Khalsa Dharam Prachar Fund, Rawalpindi  
**September 12.** Saragarhi episode  
**November 22.** Mr. Thompson's chit saying that BLS was in charge of Intermediate class of English in the college
- 1898 **January 8.** Address presented by the Sikhs of Rawalpindi to General William S.A. Lockhart, the victor of Tirah  
**June 10.** BLS still in Gordon College, Rawalpindi (Principal Barr's chit)  
**November 6.** BLS wrote to the Government of the Punjab for declaring Guru Govind Singh's birthday and Hola Muhalla (the day next to Holi) holidays for Rawalpindi district

- 1898 **November 24.** Bhai Gurmukh Singh of Singh Sabha fame die at Kandaghat  
**November 29.** BLS issued a circular regarding the need and urgency of having a Sikh newspaper in English  
**December 4.** Meeting held in the office of the *Khalsa Akhbar* at Lahore, with Bhai Dit Singh Gyani in chair, deciding to start the *Khalsa*
- 1899 **January.** The *Khalsa* weekly started from Lahore  
**March 19.** D.A.-V. High School, Rawalpindi, founded  
**April** (Baisakhi). Bi-centenary of the Khalsa Panth celebrated
- 1900 **April 21.** A letter of Sardar Narain Singh, M.A..LL.B., of Gujranwala published saying that there should be an annual conference of the educated Sikhs  
**May 24.** Dr. J. C. Oman's intention to publish a book on Sikhs and Sikhism  
**June 3.** Over two dozen Rahtia Sikhs were shaved in public in the Arya Samaj, Vachhowali, Lahore
- 1901 **February 17.** The Board of Directors approved the discontinuance of the *Khalsa*  
**April.** The *Khalsa* ceased publication  
**April 22.** Khalsa Diwan Rawalpindi registered under Act XXI of 1861  
**June 17.** Bhai Dit Singh Gyani died
- 1901-02. BLS Headmaster of Shresht-Niti Shala School, Rawalpindi
- 1902 **September 17.** 12 Marias of land, originally belonging to Hussaini, widow of Bakku, and Phalli son of Hayat *Teli* of Sukho, purchased from Uttam Chand son of Ram Bheja for the Rawalpindi Khalsa School  
**December.** Decision to celebrate the birthday of Guru Gobind Singh on a grand scale in Delhi on the occasion of the Darbar
- 1903 BLS joined Government Service as Assistant District Inspector of Schools  
**May 27.** Memorial submitted to Chief Secretary, regarding the location of the Khalsa College at Lahore  
**September 25.** Bhai Manna Singh of Rawalpindi died
- 1905 **April 11.** Sir Baba Khem Singh Bedi died
- 1908 **December 4.** BLS was 2nd Master, Government High School, Palampur
- 1909 **January 3.** Baba Sahib Ratta Nirankari died

- 1909 **August 1.** Khalsa High School started at Mahilpur  
**September.** Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia appointed member of the Imperial Council for the passage of the Anand Marriage Act  
**September 28 to Oct. 23.** BLS letters on the Anand Marriage Act  
**October 19.** BLS was requested to take charge of the *Khalsa Advocate*, Amritsar  
**October 22.** Anand Marriage Act passed
- 1910 **January 22.** Maulana Muhammad Husain died  
**May 3.** Foundation stone of Dyal Singh College, Lahore, laid by Sir Louis Dane, Governor of the Punjab  
**May 14.** Bhai Jawahir Singh of Singh Sabha fame died  
**May 19.** Bhagat Gokal Chand (Bhagat Lakshman Singh's brother) died at Rawalpindi
- 1911 **March 11.** Sewaram Singh proposed the establishment of Sikh University
- 1912 **October.** Sodhi Gurbachan Singh of Anandpur died
- 1913 **March 15.** Max Arthur Macauliffe died at Sinclair Gardens, London  
**March 18.** Meeting to mourn Mr Macauliffe's death—proposal to raise a Memorial to Mr Macauliffe  
**May 16.** First meeting of the Macauliffe Memorial Committee  
**September 6.** Appeal for funds for Macauliffe Memorial Khalsa Central Library.
- 1914 **April 1.** Khalsa High School, Jullundur, founded  
**June 3.** Rikabganj Delhi affair and the Chief Khalsa Diwan  
**July 20.** Teachers' Senior Anglo-Vernacular Permanent Certificate granted by the Punjab Education Deptt., D.P.I., under Regd. No. 170, Rawalpindi District
- 1915 **October 17.** BLS appeal for Boys and Girls School at Moga (*Tribune*, Oct. 17, 1915), *Khalsa Advocate*, Oct. 23, 1915.
- 1916 **February.** BLS Headmaster, Government High School, Ambala City  
**July.** BLS Headmaster Govt. High School, Bhera  
**September 13.** Presided over Major Hamilton's lecture in the Y.M.C.A., Ferozepur, about the part played by the Sikhs in the Great War

- 1917 **January 17.** Khalsa School Garhdiwala (Bhana) founded  
**August 31.** Sir John Maynard's reply that to give to Vernaculars the place of classical languages depended upon the opinion of the minority of Indians  
**September 3.** Protested against the proposal of the transfer of Budhiman, Vidwan and Gyani clashes from Oriental College, Lahore, to Khalsa College and odioited the Chief Khalsa Diwan to approach the authorities for the retention of these classes in the Oriental College  
**September 20.** Wrote to Sir John Maynard in reply to letter of 31.8.1917 regarding the claim of Vernacular in preference to a classical language saying that classical languages should not be imposed on all students  
 1917-18 BLS Headmaster at Ferozepur  
 1918 **May 18.** H.A.B. Rattigan, recommended the name of BLS for headmastership of the Khalsa Collegiate School, Amritsar, after the resignation of Bhai Mohan Singh  
 1919 BLS at Rawalpindi  
**January 16.** G.N. Khalsa High School, Gujjar Khan, founded  
**March 29.** Sanad presented to BLS by the Commissioner, Jullundur division, for good service in connection with the Great War, 1914-18  
 1920 **February 4.** Sir John Maynard to BLS proposing that the Macauliffe Memorial Society might be wound up and that its money be transfered to Khalsa College, Amritsar, for medals in memory of Mr Macauliffe  
**October 25.** Sir Sunder Singh Majithia's letter that BLS had been promoted to the PES as District Inspector of Schools  
 1921 **February 8.** Sir Sunder Singh Majithia agreed to become one of the trustees of the Macauliffe Memorial Fund  
**February 20.** Nankana Sahib tragedy  
**March 13.** The Khalsa College management asked the Principal to correspond with Bhagat Lakshman Singh regarding Macauliffe Memorial Fund  
**May 18.** The Principal wrote to BLS for the transfer of the Fund from the Punjab University to the Khalsa College, Amritsar  
**June.** Macauliffe Memorial Fund made over to Khalsa College, Amritsar  
 1922 **November 2.** BLS donated Rs. 50/- for the Sikhs killed and wounded in Panja Sahib

- 922 **December 2.** Sardar Bahadur Bishan Singh met the management of the Khalsa High School, Moga, and proposed that BLS be made the Headmaster  
 1923 **January 2.** Mr G.A. Wathen's note that the position of the Principal in the Khalsa College, Amritsar, had deteriorated  
**February 19.** Sardar Sunder Singh Majithia expressed satisfaction that BLS had taken over the charge of Moga Khalsa School  
**August 15.** BLS met the Prime Minister, Patiala State, regarding the Moga School  
**September 15.** Maharaja Bhupendra Singh of Patiala granted Rs. 10,000/- for the improvement of the Moga school  
**December 4.** Mr Wathen said that he could withdraw his resignation only if the constitution of the College was reshaped on the lines of a University  
**December 19.** Sir George Anderson, D.P.I., Punjab, visited Moga  
 1924 **January 26.** Sardar Tara Singh, M.L.C. of Moga warned the Government of the Punjab regarding the Akal Takht, Amritsar, affair  
**January 26.** The Governor of the Punjab visited Moga. BLS presented an address (*Civil and Military Gazette*, February 3)  
**February 28.** Maharaja of Patiala's instructions regarding Shahicli Jatha for Jaito  
**October 14.** BLS wrote to Sardar Sunder Singh to arrange for the release of Professor Teja Singh for reasons of health (later he wrote to Bhai Jodh Singh also)  
**December 20.** Bhai Jodh Singh wrote to BLS saying that it had been decided to withdraw the case against Prof. Teja Singh  
**December 23.** Case against Prof. Teja Singh withdrawn by the Punjab Government  
 1926 **May 4.** Prime Minister, Patiala State, submitted an *Arzdasht* to His Highness the Maharaja of Patiala regarding his interview with BLS and the conditions on which BLS could stay in Moga as a representative of His Highness  
**May 31.** Maharaja Patiala agreed to the conditions of BLS's stay in Moga as His Highness's representative  
**September 7.** BLS's mother Bhagtani Gurditti died, aged 83  
**September 10.** Major Barstow asked for BLS's help in revising the Regimental book on the Sikhs

- 1927 **January 31.** Sant Atar Singh died  
**February 1.** Prof. Rushbrook Williams' letter to BLS that Moga School be handed over to a Committee and that the post of His Highness's representative would be abolished  
**February 1.** BLS invited to the Baisakhi Durbar of the Patiala State  
**March 2.** BLS wrote to Prof. Rushbrook Williams regarding compensation to him
- 1928 **April, last week.** BLS accepted the Headmastership of Khalsa High School, Rupar, which he soon afterwards gave up
- 1929 **January 17.** The *Khalsa* (Weekly) resuscitated  
**April 3.** Dev Guru Bhagwan (Shiv Narain Agnihotri) died  
**August 21.** Sir Sunder Singh Majithia expressed difficulty for raising funds for establishing a syndicate for the *Khalsa*
- 1930 **January.** The *Khalsa Review* started by Sir Jogendra Singh
- 1931 **March.** Mata Raj Devi Sodhi of Anandpur died
- 1932 **February 20.** The Finance Department, Patiala, proposed to pay Rs. 2,000/- to BLS on behalf of His Highness  
**April.** The *Khalsa* transferred to Sardar Bakhshish Singh
- 1933 **April.** Mehar Singh Chawla died  
**December 14,** Rai Bahadur Atma Ram offered to help BLS in the revision and enlargement of his book on Guru Govind Singh
- 1935 **July 8.** BLS wrote to Sir Herbert W. Emerson, Governor of the Punjab, to recommend him for nomination to the Federal Assembly  
**July 23.** Governor Emerson replied to BLS that to the best of his knowledge there would be no nominations  
**October 30.** Muslims of Lahore filed suit against SGPC in connection with Shahidganj  
**November 26.** Secretary to the Government, Punjab, to BLS informing him that his pension had been raised to Rs. 72/6/-
- 1936 **May 25.** Case of Lahore Muslims regarding Shahidganj dismissed
- 1937 **January 11.** The name of Baba Gurbakhsh Singh Bedi's mother was Narain Devi (Mohindroo Khatri) of Hujra, district, Montgomery  
**February 23.** Lala Harkishan Lai died at Lahore  
**April 1.** Sir Sunder Singh Majithia became a member of the Punjab Cabinet
- 1937 **December 18.** Bhai Takht Singh of Ferozepur died
- 1938 **January 26.** Appeal of Muslims of Lahore regarding Shahidganj dismissed by the Punjab High Court.  
**November 23.** Bhai Kahan Singh of Nabha died  
**December 8.** Harbans Singh, son of Bhai Jodh Singh, died
- 1939 **October 31.** BLS wrote to Tehsildar Baramula saying he had no intention of buying land there
- 1940 **May 2.** Privy Council London dismissed with cost the appeal of Muslims regarding Shahidganj, Lahore  
**July 30.** Sardar Balwant Singh wrote to BLS saying that his *Sikh Martyrs* had been translated into Hindi
- 1941 **February 4.** Gopal Lai Khanna sought permission to translate the *Sikh Martyrs* (permission given on February 8)  
**April 2.** Sir Sunder Singh Majithia died
- 1942 **May 29.** Sardar Bahadur Ganda Singh, Jailor, died
- 1943 **September 18.** BLS drew a cheque on the Punjab National Bank, Rawalpindi City, in favour of Malik Harnam Singh for his own funeral expenses
- 1944 **December 27.** BLS died at Rawalpindi
- 1947 **April 26.** Baba Gurdit Singh Nirankari died  
**August 15.** India became independent
- 1948 **January 30.** Mahatma Gandhi shot dead by Nathuram Godse
- 1957 **March 10.** H.H. the Princess Bamba Sutherland, the eldest daughter of Maharaja Duleep Singh, died at Lahore



APPENDIX III

WRITINGS OF BHAGAT LAKSHMAN SINGH

I. BOOKS

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- Bala Nanak*. Coronation Printing Works, Amritsar.
- Guru Govind Singh's Idealism*. Sikh Tract Society, Amritsar.
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- The Sikh and His New Critics*. The Sikh Tract Society, 1918  
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- Physician, Heal Thyself* (An open letter to Babu Avinash Chandra Mazumdar, Editor, 'The Purity Servant', Lahore, 11.12.1895). The *Arya Messenger*, December 18, 1895.
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- Light of the World* (Bhai Gurdas). 'The Khalsa', November 27, 1932.
- Anand Marriage Bill*. 'The Tribune' October 5, 1909 7.10.1909 and October 13, 1909 and October 16, 1909; 'Khalsa Advocate', October 9, 1909, October 16, 1909 and October 23, 1909.
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- Ignorance in Excelsis*, 'The Khalsa Advocate', Sept. 6, 1912.
- A Grave danger to Sikhs at the hands of Sadhuism*. 'The Khalsa Advocate', March 1, 1913.
- The Forthcoming Sikh Educational Conference at Ambala*. 'The Tribune', March 13, 1918.
- The Foundation and Management of Khalsa Schools*. 'The Khalsa Advocate', March 29, 1913.
- The Seventh Sikh Educational Conference* 'The Khalsa Advocate', March 28, 1914.
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*Journalism in the Punjab*—The Tribune and the Sikhs. January 25; February 1 and 8, 1899.  
*Kaliyuga*. 1900 : February 7,15,21,28, March 7 and 14.  
*Wanted a Khalsa Church*. 25.1.1899 and 15.2.1899.  
*The Present State of the Khalsa*. January 18 and 25 and Feb.,8, 1899.

*Coming of the Khalsa Jubilee*. March 1, 8 and April 5, 1899.  
*Khalsa Jubilee*. 12.4.1899.  
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*Our Organization*. 1899 : May 17,24 and 31.  
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*Policy of the 'Khalsa'*. January 17 and February 28, 1929.  
*Rahtias*. 1900 : June 6,13,20,27, July 4,11,18,25, August 8 and 15.  
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## V PANJABI

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Bhagat Lakshman Singh's writing

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از تالیفات بکشت کشن سنگہ  
 جناب ریڈیئر صاحب اکالی اورو - قلم کئی دہوں ہے  
 رام صاحب جوہری جوہر رام جی وکیل رشتہ ایم ایل سی سابق مسٹر  
 تلمیذ پناب کا خیالات و سلسلہ آئیے اخبار میں سیدہ اخبار  
 ہو رہے ہیں جس آزادی اور دہری سے یہ خیالات ظاہر ہو گئے  
 میں قابل توجہ و تحسین ہے۔ کا ٹیکہ یہ دیکھ ہی آئے ہیں ہمارے  
 کی بات جس سے منوع ان کی بیوقوفی متصور ہوتی ہے کہ ہر کسی کے  
 یہ ساری سرگرمی اور سرگوشی ایک نہایت قابل اعتراضی خام خیالی  
 میں صرف کی جا رہی ہے جس کا نتیجہ ہوا بدنامیوں کا صوبہ ہمارا  
 ہے مجبوراً اور سلسلہ فالہ نتیجہ کا اضعاف ہوا نہایت مہر تانت  
 ہو گا اگر خدا خواستہ ہندو اور سکھ لکھنؤوں کے اپنی ساقی سے  
 ان خیالات کو غیر پروٹیکٹ کا پیلے دیا جائے میں حیران  
 ہوں کہ اکالی اخبار جبکہ اس کے آرگن فالہ نتیجہ کا ایک  
 مسئلہ آرگن سمجھے ہیں اس میں ایسے مضامین کیوں شائع ہوئے ہیں  
 جس کا لب لباب یہ ہے کہ مذہب ہندو کا دیہاتی اور  
 عقیداتی و فنی فنی لوگوں میں کا خیالات جذبات اور اعتراض پر  
 نہ صرف یہ اختلاف اور تعادمت ہے بلکہ ایسے منافقت سے  
 جو کہ وہ ان کی بار دہائی منافقت و دروغی کرکلی ہے تاہم کئی سکھ  
 میں جوہری جوہر صاحب کا یہ اتحاد رہا جس پر کفر و فسق

‘گورو-پد نیرتھ’ سبھیپی۔ لیختی، 19 فروری، 1935۔

‘کون گورو، کون سیک؟’ نامیاری ایڈیٹورس سبھیپی۔ لیختی 25 مئی، 1935۔

سرکار لال سبھیپی جی۔ خالسا سمارا، امیتسر، 30 جنوری، 6 فروری، 1936۔

سبھیپی سبھیپی لکھنؤ۔ پنچ دہریا، لاہور، مارچ، 1941۔

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 جیٹن پٹی، 1962

مہرا سبھیپی دھیران، بگڑ لکھنؤ سبھیپی جی دی جاد۔ ایڈیٹوریئل دھیران، ‘خالسا’ دھیران،  
 16 مارچ، 1950۔

## VI URDU

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 نمبر، 1915۔

مہرا سبھیپی دھ جی۔ خالسا سمارا، لاہور، کالگریپر نمبر، 11 جنوری، 1916۔

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